



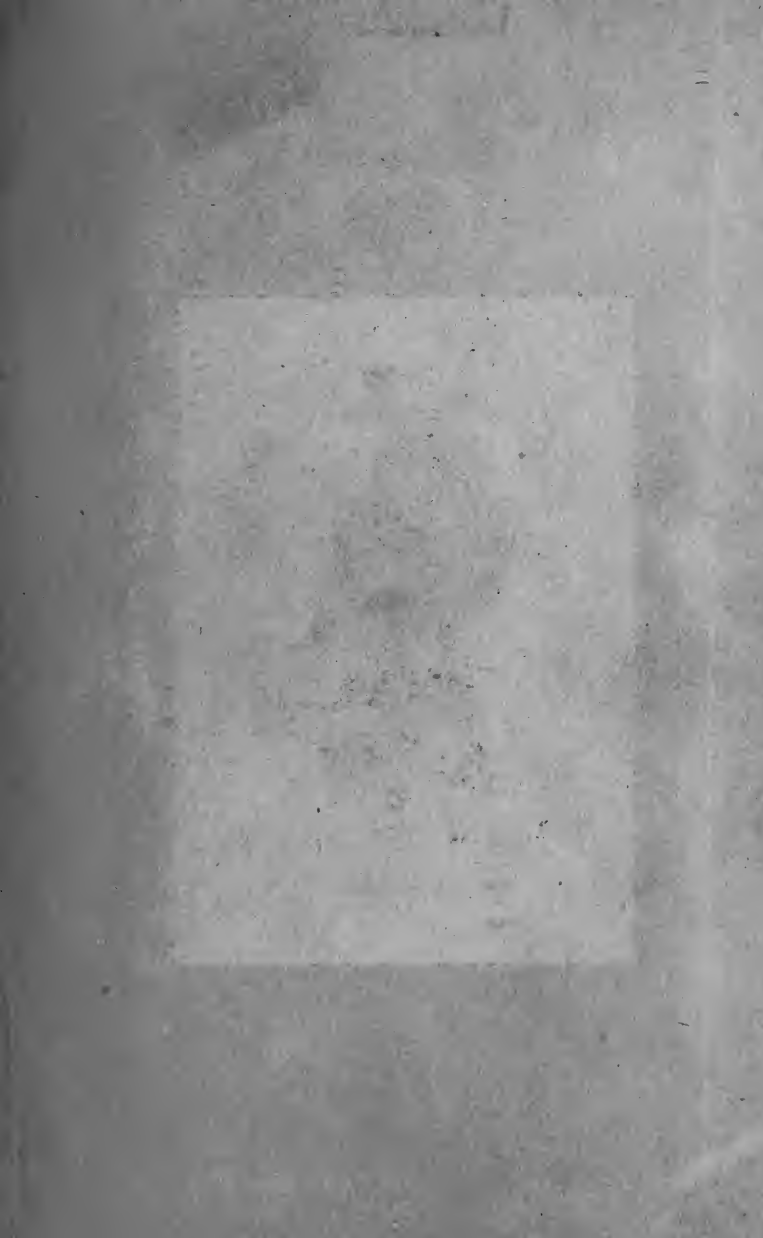


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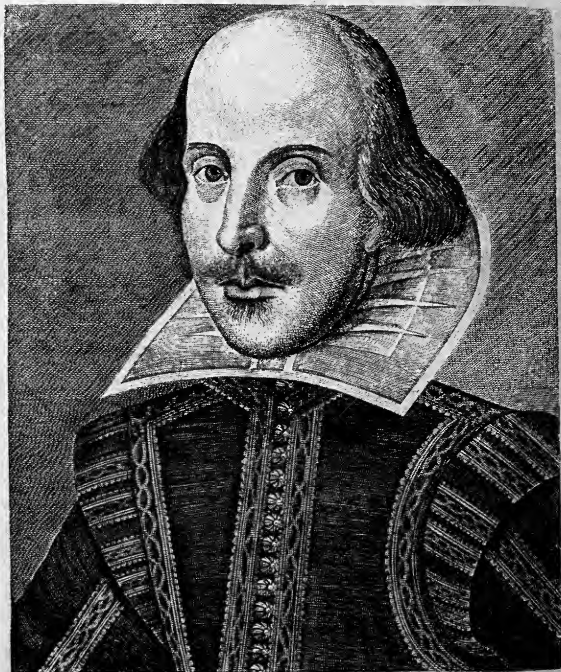




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Merrill's English Texts

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SHAKESPEARE'S  
MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES  
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NEW YORK  
CHARLES E. MERRILL CO.  
44-60 EAST TWENTY-THIRD STREET

PR 2825

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1910

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Revised. A.M. Lang, 21.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

THE text here presented has been carefully collated with that of six or seven of the best editions. Where there was any disagreement we have adopted the readings which seemed most reasonable and were supported by the best authority.

Professor Meiklejohn's exhaustive notes form the substance of those here used; and his plan, as set forth in the "General Notice" annexed, has been carried out in these volumes. But as these editions of the plays are intended rather for pupils in school and college than for ripe Shakespearian scholars, we have not hesitated to prune his notes of whatever was thought to be too learned for our purpose, or on other grounds was deemed irrelevant to it.

## GENERAL NOTICE

“AN attempt has been made in these editions to interpret Shakespeare by the aid of Shakespeare himself. The Method of Comparison has been constantly employed; and the language used by him in one place has been compared with the language used in other places in similar circumstances, as well as with older English and with newer English.

“The first purpose in this elaborate annotation is, of course, the full working out of Shakespeare’s meaning. The Editor has in all circumstances taken as much pains with this as if he had been making out the difficult and obscure terms of a will in which he himself was personally interested; and he submits that this thorough excavation of the meaning of a really profound thinker is one of the very best kinds of training that a boy or girl can receive at school. This is to read the very mind of Shakespeare, and to weave his thoughts into the fibre of one’s own mental constitution. And always new rewards come to the careful reader—in the shape of new meanings, recognition of thoughts he had before missed, of relations between the characters that had hitherto escaped him. For reading Shakespeare is just like examining Nature; there are no hollownnesses, there is no scamped work, for Shakespeare is as patiently exact and as first-hand as Nature herself.

“Besides this thorough working-out of Shakespeare’s meaning, advantage has been taken of the opportunity to teach his English—to make each play an introduction to the *English of Shakespeare*. For this purpose copious collections of similar phrases have been gathered from other plays; his idioms have been dwelt upon; his peculiar use of words; his style and his rythm. Some teachers may consider that too many instances are given; but, in teaching, as in everything else, the old French saying is true:

*Assez n'y a, s'il trop n'y a.* The teacher need not require each pupil to give him *all* the instances collected. If each gives one or two, it will probably be enough; and, among them all, it is certain that one or two will stick in the memory.

“It were much to be hoped that Shakespeare should become more and more of a study, and that every boy and girl should have a thorough knowledge of at least one play of Shakespeare before leaving school. It would be one of the best lessons in human life. It would also have the effect of bringing back into the too pale and formal English of modern times a large number of pithy and vigorous phrases which would help to develop as well as to reflect vigor in the characters of the readers. Shakespeare used the English language with more power than any other writer that ever lived—he made it do more and say more than it had ever done; he made it speak in a more original way; and his combinations of words are perpetual provocations and invitations to originality and to newness of insight.”—J. M. D. MEIKLEJOHN, M. A., Late Professor of Pedagogy in the University of St. Andrews.



# INTRODUCTION

## LIFE AND WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

“Shakespeare was born, it is thought, April 23, 1564, the son of a comfortable burgess of Stratford-on-Avon. While he was still young, his father fell into poverty, and an interrupted education left the son an inferior scholar. He had ‘small Latin and less Greek.’ But by dint of genius and by living in a society in which all sorts of information were attainable, he became an accomplished man. The story told of his deer-stealing in Charlecote woods is without proof, but it is likely that his youth was wild and passionate. At nineteen he married Ann Hathaway, seven years older than himself, and was probably unhappy with her. For this reason or from poverty, or from the driving of the genius that led him to the stage, he left Stratford about 1586–1587, and went to London at the age of twenty-two; and, falling in with Marlowe, Greene, and the rest, he became an actor and a playwright, and may have lived their unrestrained and riotous life for some years.

“**His First Period.**—It is probable that before leaving Stratford he had sketched a part at least of his *Venus and Adonis*. It is full of the country sights and sounds, of the ways of birds and animals, such as he saw when wandering in Charlecote woods. Its rich and overladen poetry and its warm coloring made him, when it was published, in 1593, at once the favorite of men like Lord Southampton, and lifted him into fame. But before that date he had done work for the stage by touching up old plays and writing new ones. We seem to trace his ‘prentice hand’ in many dramas of the time, but the first he is usually thought to have retouched is *Titus Andronicus*, and, some time after, the First Part of *Henry VI*.

“*Love’s Labour’s Lost*, the first of his original plays, in which he

quizzed and excelled the Euphuists in wit, was followed by the rapid farce of *The Comedy of Errors*. Out of these frolics of intellect and action he passed into pure poetry in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and mingled into fantastic beauty the classic legend, the mediæval fairyland, and the clownish life of the English mechanic. Italian story then laid its charm upon him, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* preceded the southern glow of passion in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he first reached tragic power. They complete, with *Love's Labour's Won*, afterwards recast as *All's Well That Ends Well*, the love plays of his early period. We may, perhaps, add to them the second act of an older play, *Edward III*. We should certainly read along with them, as belonging to the same passionate time, his *Rape of Lucrece*, a poem finally printed in 1594, one year later than the *Venus and Adonis*.

“The patriotic feeling of England, also represented in Marlowe and Peele, now seized on him, and he turned from love to begin his great series of historical plays with *Richard II*, 1593-1594. *Richard III* followed quickly. To introduce it and to complete the subject, he recast the Second and Third Parts of *Henry VI* (written by some unknown authors), and ended his first period with *King John*—five plays in a little more than two years.

“His Second Period, 1596-1602.—In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare reached entire mastery over his art. A mingled woof of tragic and comic threads is brought to its highest point of color when Portia and Shylock meet in court. Pure comedy followed in his retouch of the old *Taming of the Shrew*, and all the wit of the world, mixed with noble history, met next in the three comedies of *Falstaff*, the First and Second Parts of *Henry IV*, and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The historical plays were then closed with *Henry V*, a splendid dramatic song to the glory of England.

“The Globe theater, in which he was one of the proprietors, was built in 1599. In the comedies he wrote for it, Shakespeare turned to write of love again, not to touch its deeper passion as before, but to play with it in all its lighter phases. The flashing dialogue of *Much Ado About Nothing* was followed by the far-off forest world of *As You Like It*, where ‘the time fleets carelessly,’ and

Rosalind's character is the play. Amid all its gracious lightness steals in a new element, and the melancholy of Jaques is the first touch we have of the older Shakespeare who had 'gained his experience, and whose experience had made him sad.' And yet it was but a touch; *Twelfth Night* shows no trace of it, though the play that followed, *All's Well That Ends Well*, again strikes a sadder note. We find this sadness fully grown in the later sonnets, which are said to have been finished about 1602. They were published in 1609.

"Shakespeare's life changed now, and his mind changed with it. He had grown wealthy during this period and famous, and was loved by society. He was the friend of the Earls of Southampton and Essex, and of William Herbert, Lord Pembroke. The queen patronized him; all the best literary society was his own. He had rescued his father from poverty, bought the best house in Stratford and much land, and was a man of wealth and comfort. Suddenly all his life seems to have grown dark. His best friends fell into ruin, Essex perished on the scaffold, Southampton went to the Tower, Pembroke was banished from the Court; he may himself, as some have thought, have been concerned in the rising of Essex. Added to this, we may conjecture, from the imaginative pageantry of the sonnets, that he had unwisely loved, and been betrayed in his love by a dear friend. Disgust of his profession as an actor, and public and private ill weighed heavily on him, and in darkness of spirit, though still clinging to the business of the theater, he passed from comedy to write of the sterner side of the world, to tell the tragedy of mankind.

"His Third Period, 1602-1608, begins with the last days of Queen Elizabeth. It contains all the great tragedies, and opens with the fate of Hamlet, who felt, like the poet himself, that 'the time was out of joint.' Hamlet, the dreamer, may well represent Shakespeare as he stood aside from the crash that overwhelmed his friends, and thought on the changing world. The tragi-comedy of *Measure for Measure* was next written, and is tragic in thought throughout. *Julius Cæsar*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Troilus and Cressida* (finished from an incomplete work of his youth), *Antony*

and *Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon* (only in part his own), were all written in these five years. The darker sins of men, the unpitying fate which slowly gathers round and falls on men, the avenging wrath of conscience, the cruelty and punishment of weakness, the treachery, lust, jealousy, ingratitude, madness of men, the follies of the great, and the fickleness of the mob are all, with a thousand other varying moods and passions, painted, and felt as his own while he painted them, during this stern time.

**“His Fourth Period, 1608–1613.**—As Shakespeare wrote of these things, he passed out of them, and his last days are full of the gentle and loving calm of one who has known sin and sorrow and fate but has risen above them into peaceful victory. Like his great contemporary, Bacon, he left the world and his own evil time behind him, and with the same quiet dignity sought the innocence and stillness of country life. The country breathes through all the dramas of this time. The flowers Perdita gathers in *The Winter’s Tale*, and the frolic of the sheep-shearing he may have seen in the Stratford meadows; the song of Fidele in *Cymbeline* is written by one who already feared no more the frown of the great, nor slander nor censure rash, and was looking forward to the time when men should say of him—

Quiet consummation have;  
And renownèd be thy grave!

“Shakespeare probably left London in 1609, and lived in the house he had bought at Stratford-on-Avon. He was reconciled, it is said, to his wife, and the plays he writes speak of domestic peace and forgiveness. The story of *Marina*, which he left unfinished, and which two later writers expanded into the play of *Pericles*, is the first of his closing series of dramas. *The Two Noble Kinsmen* of Fletcher, a great part of which is now, on doubtful grounds, I think, attributed to Shakespeare, and in which the poet sought the inspiration of Chaucer, would belong to this period. *Cymbeline*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *The Tempest* bring his history up to 1612, and in the next year he closed his poetic life by writing, with Fletcher, *Henry VIII*. For three years he kept silence, and then,

on the 23d of April, 1616, the day he reached the age of fifty-two, as is supposed, he died.

**“His Work.**—We can only guess with regard to Shakespeare’s life; we can only guess with regard to his character. We have tried to find out what he was from his sonnets and from his plays, but every attempt seems to be a failure. We cannot lay our hand on anything and say for certain that it was spoken by Shakespeare out of his own character. The most personal thing in all his writings is one that has scarcely been noticed. It is the Epilogue to *The Tempest*; and if it be, as is most probable, the last thing he ever wrote, then its cry for forgiveness, its tale of inward sorrow, only to be relieved by prayer, give us some dim insight into how the silence of those three years was passed; while its declaration of his aim in writing, ‘which was to please,’—the true definition of an artist’s aim,—should make us cautious in our efforts to define his character from his works. Shakespeare made men and women whose dramatic action on each other, and towards a catastrophe, was intended to please the public, not to reveal himself.

“No commentary on his writings, no guesses about his life or character, are worth much which do not rest on this canon as their foundation: What he did, thought, learned, and felt, he did, thought, learned, and felt as an artist. . . . Fully influenced, as we see in *Hamlet* he was, by the graver and more philosophic cast of thought of the later time of Elizabeth; passing on into the reign of James I, when pedantry took the place of gayety, and sensual the place of imaginative love in the drama, and artificial art the place of that art which itself is nature; he preserves to the last the natural passion, the simple tenderness, the sweetness, grace, and fire of the youthful Elizabethan poetry. *The Winter’s Tale* is as lovely a love story as *Romeo and Juliet*. *The Tempest* is more instinct with imagination than *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and as great in fancy; and yet there are fully twenty years between them. The only change is in the increase of power, and in a closer and graver grasp of human nature. Around him the whole tone and manner of the drama altered for the worse, but his work grew to the close in strength and beauty.”—STOPFORD BROOKE.

## ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY

**The Characters.**—" *The Merchant of Venice* is one of the most popular creations of the great poet, and unites within itself all the charms of Shakespeare's poetry. In the first place, let us consider the characterization.

"Apart from the numerous other characters, which are as true to life as they are clearly and consistently developed, and which balance and set off one another in organic contrasts:—the noble and high-minded but passive and melancholy Antonio, who is little suited to bear the burden of an active, energetic life, and is so well described in the words 'a princely merchant'; his gay and sincere friend, Bassanio, who is certainly somewhat frivolous, but amiable and intelligent, a true Italian *gentiluomo* in the best sense of the word; his comrades Lorenzo and Gratiano; further, Portia, who is no less amiable than she is intellectual, and her graceful maid, Nerissa; also Jessica, that child of nature, who loses herself in the enthusiasm of her Eastern passion of love,—apart from all these firmly and accurately delineated characters, down to the silly Launcelot Gobbo and his childish old father, we have in Shylock, the Jew, a true masterpiece of characterization. . . .

**Sources of the Plot.**—"As we here have the most brilliant display of Shakespeare's masterly skill in characterization, so his skill as regards the composition, the arrangement, and the development of the complicated substance of the action is no less admirable. The invention, it is true, is not altogether his own; the greater part of it is taken from a novel of Giovanni Fiorentino's, *Il Pecorone* (which was written in 1378, but not printed till 1558), and the subject of this novel again was borrowed from the *Gesta Romanorum*, another part of which contains the principal features of the story of the three caskets,

which, however, is different in point. Still, these sources, and more especially the *Gesta Romanorum*, which probably Shakespeare alone made use of, would have furnished the poet with but a thin skeleton which he would have had to clothe with flesh and blood; besides which, he has freely added several characters, and increased the complication by the introduction of a new episode.

**Construction of the Play.**—"We here find three strange and complex knots wound one into another: first, the lawsuit between Antonio and Shylock; then, Bassanio's courtship and that of the other three suitors for Portia, and Gratiano's for Nerissa; lastly, Jessica's love for and elopement with Lorenzo. These manifold relations, actions, and incidents are arranged with such great clearness (the one developed out of and with the other) that we nowhere lose the thread; that every separate part is harmoniously connected with the other; and that, in the end, all is rounded off into an organic whole. . . .

"We may add that Portia's fate, owing to the obstinacy of her deceased father, appears bound to be the decision of chance; and that, in contrast to this, her maid Nerissa voluntarily makes her own happiness dependent upon the fortune of her mistress; and that, again, their constrained will and inclinations form a decided contrast to Jessica's voluntary choice, which offends both law and right. . . .

"Where is the *internal unity* which—before the tribunal of criticism—can alone justify the combination of such heterogeneous elements in one drama? . . . An actual connection, by means of the thread of incidents, is indeed clearly enough set forth, for it is owing to Antonio's self-sacrificing readiness to comply with his friend's wishes that he falls into the Jew's clutches, and owing to Portia's wit and inventive genius that he is saved; and the courses of the two other love intrigues are connected with these. But this bond obviously is purely external, accidental; what, in its *inner, essential meaning*, has the unhappy lawsuit (which verges upon the tragic) to do with the gay, happy courtship of Bassanio and Portia? . . .

"In regard to the question as to where this unity is to be found, commentators disagree here more than in the case of most of Shakespeare's dramas. And it certainly does, in the present case, seem as if the multifarious elements of the action were of a strange and opposite kind of nature; therefore we cannot feel surprised that some critics should doubt whether the elements are combinable. And the details also assert themselves with so much decision, are so free and independent, stand out of the picture in so full and well-rounded a manner, that they involuntarily rivet the eye, and, so to say, lead captive the mind. Hence it becomes difficult to withdraw one's gaze from the graceful movements of the several figures, from the beautiful coloring and the lovely play of light and shade, in order to look for the invisible threads which run through, and hold all the several parts together.

"In the first place, as regards the lawsuit between Antonio and the Jew, there can, as I think, be scarcely any doubt that its meaning and significance coincide with the old juristic proposition: *Summum jus summa injuria* [the strictest law, the greatest injustice]. . . . The proposition merely maintains that an acknowledged and positive law turns into its opposite and becomes a wrong when carried to the extreme point of its limited nature and one-sided conception, and when driven to its extreme consequence.

"Shylock holds fast to the law. Forbearance, gentleness, kindness . . . he has never known; injustice, harshness, and contempt stood around his cradle, hate and persecution obstructed every step of his career. With convulsive vehemence, therefore, he clutches hold of the law, the small morsel of justice which cannot be withheld even from the Jew. This legal, formal, external justice Shylock obviously has on his side, but by taking and following it to the letter, in absolute one-sidedness, he falls into the deepest, foulest wrong, which then necessarily recoils ruinously upon his own head.

"The same view of the double-edged nature of justice, which is here set forth in its utmost subtilty, is, however, I think, also



exhibited in manifold lights and shades through the other parts of the play. The determination of Portia's father, which deprives her of all participation in the choice of a husband, is indeed based upon paternal right, but this very right—even though justified by the best intentions of anxious affection—is again, at the same time, a decided wrong. . . . Who would have cast a stone at her had she broken her vow and guided her well-beloved, amiable, and worthy lover, by hints and intimations, in making the right choice? The wrong, which is here again contained within what is in itself right, would have fallen with tragic force had not accident—in the form of a happy thought, as in the case of the lawsuit—led to a happy result. . . .

“The penalty which the court imposes upon the Jew, and by which he is compelled to sanction the marriage of his daughter with Lorenzo, also neutralizes the conflicting elements more in an external and accidental manner than by true and internal adjustment. Lastly, right and wrong are no less carried to their extreme points, and consequently placed in a balancing state of uncertainty, in the quarrel between the two loving couples about the rings which they had parted with, in violation of their sworn promises,—a scene with which the play closes. . . .

“Thus we see that the meaning and significance of the many, apparently, heterogeneous elements are united in one point; they are but variations of the same theme. Human life itself is conceived as a great lawsuit, and justice as the foundation and center of all existence. . . . No doubt the end of law and justice ought to be to maintain and support human life. But they do not form the base and center; they do not include the full value or the whole truth of human existence. When conceived in so one-sided a manner, they, on the contrary, neutralize each other and all life as well; right becomes wrong, and wrong right. Law and justice form, rather, but a single side of the whole. . . . Life is not based upon what is right, but upon *love* and *mercy*. Love with its indulgence and clemency, is the higher stage above what is just. . . .

**The Play as Comedy.**—“Objection has been raised against

this drama, inasmuch as it has been supposed that the scene in court, with its tragic seriousness, is inappropriate to the cheerful coloring of the whole; that the treatment of the Jew, especially his being compelled to become a Christian, is offensive to the feelings and disturbing to the state of mind into which the play has thrown us—that, therefore, it remains a matter of doubt as to which species of drama this play ought to belong. But Shakespeare, as I think, has clearly enough intimated that he does not in any way consider Shylock a tragic character. . . .

“That Shakespeare himself intended the piece to be regarded as a comedy is attested, not only by its being included among his comedies by Heminge and Condell (in the first part of the folio edition), but especially by the fifth act in the play itself, which follows directly upon the trial scene. . . . It not only entirely effaces any tragic impressions that may have been left by the fourth act, but all dissonances, all harsh discords, are resolved into the purest harmony. The gay, graceful dalliance of happy and genuine love puts an end to the sharp contrasts between right and wrong, between appearance and reality, between the spirit and the letter; they neutralize each other because they cannot exist in the face of truth and love, which are the true anchorage of human life.

“As previously, the tragic sorrow—which is a part of Antonio’s fate—was everywhere described in the softest colors, and the bitterness appeared clothed in the form of that peaceful, gentle, submissive sadness into which Antonio’s melancholy resolves itself (which clearly enough gives us a glimmer of the happy issue), so the last act most distinctly gives the piece its comic stamp, and playfully puts a mask over its serious character. We cannot but admire the artistic skill of the poet who, while apparently violating the rules of his art, and thus in danger of being accused by the multitude of failure of effect, nevertheless pursued his object so steadily and consistently, and attained it so surely. . . .

**Date of Composition.**—“*The Merchant of Venice* must have been written before 1598, as it is mentioned by Meres. Hence

it belongs to the first decade of Shakespeare's artistic labors, and has, most probably, to be assigned to the year 1597. This is also the opinion of Chalmers and Drake, and with them of Tieck and others. Malone, who places it in 1598 without giving any reason, does not appear to have considered that if it had been written in that year it could not well have been mentioned by Meres. The oldest print, in two different quartos, belongs to the year 1600. It is astonishing what progress Shakespeare had made in these few years, when we compare this play with the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, or with *The Comedy of Errors*."—ULRICI, *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art*.

## CRITICAL OPINIONS

"*The Merchant of Venice* is one of Shakespeare's most perfect works; popular to an extraordinary degree and calculated to produce the most powerful effect on the stage, and at the same time a wonder of ingenuity and art for the reflecting critic.

"The melancholy and self-neglectful magnanimity of Antonio is affectingly sublime. Like a princely merchant, he is surrounded with a whole train of noble friends. The contrast which this forms to the selfish cruelty of the usurer Shylock was necessary to redeem the honor of human nature. The danger which hangs over Antonio till toward the conclusion of the fourth act, and which the imagination is almost afraid to approach, would fill us with too painful anxiety, if the poet did not also provide for our entertainment and diversion. This is particularly effected by the scenes at the country seat of Portia, which transport the spectator into quite another sphere. And yet they are closely connected, by the chain of cause and effect, with the main business: the preparations of Bassanio for his courtship are the cause of Antonio's subscribing the dangerous bond; and Portia, by the advice of her uncle, a celebrated councillor, effects the safety of the friend of her lover.

"But the relations of the dramatic composition are admirably observed in still another respect. The trial between Shylock and Antonio, though it proceeds like a real event, still remains an unheard-of and singular case. Shakespeare has consequently associated with it a love intrigue not less extraordinary; the one is rendered natural and probable by means of the other. A rich, beautiful, and clever heiress, who can be won only by the solving of a riddle; the locked caskets; the foreign princes who come to try the adventure,—with all this wonderful splendor the imagination is powerfully excited. The two scenes in which

the Prince of Morocco, in the language of Eastern hyperbole, and the self-conceited Prince of Arragon make their choice among the caskets, merely raise our curiosity and give employment to our wits; on the third, where the two lovers stand trembling before the inevitable choice, which in one moment must unite or separate them forever, Shakespeare has lavished all the charms of feeling, all the magic of poetry. We share in the rapture of Portia and Bassanio at the fortunate choice; we easily conceive why they are fond of each other, for they are both most deserving of love.

“The judgment scene, with which the fourth act is occupied, is in itself a perfect drama, concentrating the interest of the whole. The knot is now untied, and, according to the common ideas of theatrical satisfaction, the curtain might drop. But the poet was unwilling to dismiss his audience with the gloomy impressions which the delivery of Antonio, accomplished with so much difficulty, contrary to all expectation, and the punishment of Shylock were calculated to leave behind; he has therefore added the fifth act by way of a musical afterpiece in the piece itself. The episode of Jessica, fugitive daughter of the Jew, . . . and the artifice by which Portia and her companion are enabled to rally their newly married husbands, supply him with the materials. The scene opens with the playful prattling of two lovers in a summer evening; it is followed by soft music and a rapturous eulogy on this powerful disposer of the human mind and the world; the principal characters then make their appearance, and, after an assumed dissension, which is gracefully carried on, the whole ends with the most exhilarating mirth.”—SCHLEGEL, *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*.

“*The Merchant of Venice* is generally esteemed the best of Shakespeare’s comedies. In the management of the plot, which is sufficiently complex without the slightest confusion or incoherence, I do not conceive that it has been surpassed in the annals of any theater. Yet there are those who still affect to speak of Shakespeare as a barbarian; and others who, giving

what they think due credit to his genius, deny him all judgment and dramatic taste. A comparison of his works with those of his contemporaries—and it is surely to them that we should look—will prove that his judgment is by no means the least of his rare qualities. This is not so remarkable in the mere construction of his fable, though the present comedy is absolutely perfect in that point of view, and several others are excellently managed, as in the general keeping of the characters and the choice of incidents. . . . The variety of characters in *The Merchant of Venice* and the powerful delineation of those upon whom the interest chiefly depends, the effectiveness of many scenes in representation, the copiousness of the wit, and the beauty of the language, it would be superfluous to extol.”—HALLAM.

### SHYLOCK

“In proportion as Shylock has ceased to be a popular bugbear, ‘baited with the rabble’s curse,’ he becomes a half-favorite with the philosophical part of the audience, who are disposed to think that Jewish revenge is at least as good as Christian injuries. Shylock is a good hater, ‘a man no less sinned against than sinning.’ If he carries his revenge too far, yet he has strong grounds for ‘the lodged hate he bears Antonio,’ which he explains with equal force of eloquence and reason.

“He seems the depository of the vengeance of his race; and, though the long habit of brooding over daily insults and injuries has crusted over his temper with inveterate misanthropy, and hardened him against the contempt of mankind, this adds but little to the triumphant pretensions of his enemies. There is a strong, quick, and deep sense of justice mixed up with the gall and bitterness of his resentment. The constant apprehension of being burnt alive, plundered, banished, reviled, and trampled on, might be supposed to sour the most forbearing nature, and to take something from that ‘milk of human kindness,’ with which his persecutors contemplated his indignities,

“The desire of revenge is almost inseparable from the sense of wrong; and we can hardly help sympathizing with the proud spirit hid beneath his ‘Jewish gaberdine,’ stung to madness by repeated undeserved provocations, and laboring to throw off the load of obloquy and oppression heaped upon him and all his tribe by one desperate act of ‘lawful’ revenge, till the ferociousness of the means by which he is to execute his purpose, and the pertinacity with which he adheres to it, turn us against him. But even at last, when disappointed of the sanguinary revenge with which he had glutted his hopes, and exposed to beggary and contempt by the letter of the law on which he had insisted with so little remorse, we pity him, and think him hardly dealt with by his judges.

“In all his answers and retorts upon his adversaries, he has the best, not only of the argument, but of the question, reasoning on their own principles and practice. They are so far from allowing any measure of equal dealing, of common justice or humanity between themselves and the Jew, that even when they come to ask a favor of him, and Shylock reminds them that on such a day they spit upon him; another, spurned him; another, called him dog; and for these courtesies they request he’ll lend them so much money,—Antonio, his old enemy, instead of any acknowledgment of the shrewdness and justice of this remonstrance, which would have been preposterous in a respectable Catholic merchant in those times, threatens him with a repetition of the same treatment:—

‘I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.’

“After this, the appeal to the Jew’s mercy, as if there were any common principle of right and wrong between them, is the rankest hypocrisy or the blindest prejudice; and the Jew’s answer to one of Antonio’s friends who asks him what his pound of forfeit flesh is good for, is irresistible.”—HAZLITT, *Characters of Shakespeare’s Plays*.

## PORTIA

“Portia is endued with her own share of those delightful qualities which Shakespeare has lavished on many of his female characters; but besides the dignity, the sweetness, and the tenderness which should distinguish her sex generally, she is individualized by qualities peculiar to herself; by her high mental powers, her enthusiasm of temperament, her decision of purpose, and her buoyancy of spirit. These are innate. She has other distinguishing qualities more external, which are the result of the circumstances in which she is placed. She is the heiress of a princely home and countless wealth; a train of obedient pleasures have ever waited around her; and from infancy she has breathed an atmosphere redolent of perfume and blandishment. Accordingly, there is a commanding grace, a high-bred, airy elegance, a spirit of magnificence, in all that she does and says, as one to whom splendor had been familiar from her very birth. . . .

“She is full of penetrative wisdom, and genuine tenderness, and lively wit; but as she has never known want, or grief, or fear, or disappointment, her wisdom is without a touch of the sombre or the sad; her affections are all mixed up with faith, hope, and joy; and her wit has not a particle of malevolence or causticity. . . .

“The sudden plan which she forms for the release of her husband’s friend, her disguise, and her deportment as the young and learned doctor would appear forced and improbable in any other woman, but in Portia are the simple and natural result of her character. The quickness with which she perceives the legal advantage which may be taken of the circumstances, the spirit of adventure with which she engages in the masquerading, and the decision, firmness, and intelligence with which she executes her generous purpose are all in perfect keeping, and nothing appears forced—nothing as introduced merely for theatrical effect.

“But all the finest parts of Portia’s character are brought to bear in the trial scene. There she shines forth, all her divine



self. Her intellectual powers, her elevated sense of religion, her high, honorable principles, her best feelings as a woman, are all displayed. She maintains at first a calm self-command, as one sure of carrying her point in the end; yet the painful, heart-thrilling uncertainty in which she keeps the whole court, until suspense verges upon agony, is not contrived for effect merely; it is necessary and inevitable. She has two objects in view: to deliver her husband's friend, and to maintain her husband's honor by the discharge of his just debt, though paid out of her own wealth ten times over. It is evident that she would rather owe the safety of Antonio to anything rather than the legal quibble with which her cousin Bellario has armed her, and which she reserves as a last resource. Thus all the speeches addressed to Shylock in the first instance are either direct or indirect experiments on his temper and feelings. . . .

"At length the crisis arrives, for patience and womanhood can endure no longer; and when Shylock, carrying his savage bent 'to the last hour of act,' springs on his victim—'A sentence! come, prepare!'—then the smothered scorn, indignation, and disgust burst forth with an impetuosity which interferes with the judicial solemnity she had at first affected. . . . But she afterward recovers her propriety, and triumphs with a cooler scorn and a more self-possessed exultation. . . .

"What shall be said of the casket scene with Bassanio, where every line which Portia speaks is so worthy of herself, so full of sentiment, and beauty, and poetry, and passion? Too naturally frank for disguise, too modest to confess her depth of love while the issue of the trial remains in suspense, the conflict between love and fear and maidenly dignity causes the most delicious confusion that ever tinged a woman's cheek or dropped in broken utterance from her lips. . . .

"Portia's strength of intellect takes a natural tinge from the flush and bloom of her young and prosperous existence, and from her fervent imagination. In the casket scene, she fears indeed the issue of the trial, on which more than her life is hazarded; but while she trembles, her hope is stronger than her

fear. While Bassanio is contemplating the caskets, she suffers herself to dwell for one moment on the possibility of disappointment and misery. . . . Then immediately follows that revulsion of feeling, so beautifully characteristic of the hopeful, trusting, mounting spirit of this noble creature. . . .

"Her passionate exclamations of delight when Bassanio has fixed on the right casket are as strong as though she had despaired before. Fear and doubt she could repel—the native elasticity of her mind bore up against them; yet she makes us feel that, as the sudden joy overpowers her almost to fainting, the disappointment would as certainly have killed her. . . .

"In the last act, Shylock and his machinations being dismissed from our thoughts and the rest of the *dramatis personæ* assembled together at Belmont, all our interest and all our attention are riveted on Portia, and the conclusion leaves the most delightful impression on the fancy. The playful equivocal of the rings, the sportive trick she puts on her husband, and her thorough enjoyment of the jest, which she checks just as it is proceeding beyond the bounds of propriety, show how little she was displeased by the sacrifice of her gift, and are all consistent with her bright and buoyant spirit. In conclusion, when Portia invites her company to enter her palace to refresh themselves after their travels and talk over 'these events at full,' the imagination, unwilling to lose sight of the brilliant group, follows them in gay procession from the lovely moonlit garden to marble halls and princely revels, to splendor and festive mirth, to love and happiness."—MRS. JAMESON, *Characteristics of Women*.

### BASSANIO

"Shakespeare has given emphasis to the alliance between Antonio and Bassanio, not merely by removing all secondary solicitations, but by giving depth and definition of the contrast of their characters, and, moreover, by exhibiting the truth of the attachment at a time when that contrast was still further enhanced by the current of accidents. . . .

"Bassanio has lived like a prodigal, run in debt with his friends, and now coolly proposes to his chief creditor to make a serious addition to his debt, on the speculation that it will give him a chance to pay all by that very precarious as well as undignified resort of making up to an heiress." We are not very seriously offended at this because "we believe Bassanio on the same ground that Antonio does; we approve of the consent of Antonio on the same grounds that made Bassanio think it not wrong to ask it. The character of an act or a proceeding founds at last on the motive; and the motive is the man; and poetry and romance are allowed to invent perfections of humanity that may yet be unattainable. And thus in a poetic drama we admire and sympathize with a debt-burdened suitor to a wealthy lady, because there is no moral impossibility in the nature of things, of such a suit being in truth unsordid. . . .

"Our faith is made happy when Bassanio, who has nothing either to give or to hazard, chooses the casket of least promising exterior, which neither flatters the self-glory, the noble infirmity of Morocco, of being an object of envy to mankind, nor appeals to the self-complacency that betrayed the Prince of Arragon by referring the chooser to the measure of his deserts, but, repelling rather than inviting, demands the resolution of self-sacrifice—'Who chooses me must give and hazard all he hath.' . . . His is a spirit of that rare stamp, which fortunate persons even now meet with in the world, to conciliate good will, to attract kindness, and excite among those around a very rivalry of liberalities and good offices, and yet not to grow selfish, unsympathetic, and heartlessly incapable of conceiving, much less of returning, the affection it is proper to them to inspire."—LLOYD, *Critical Essays on Shakespeare*.

#### JESSICA AND LORENZO

"It is observable that something of the intellectual brilliance of Portia is reflected on the other female characters of *The Mer-*

*chant of Venice*, so as to preserve in the midst of contrast a certain harmony and keeping. Thus Jessica, though properly kept subordinate, is certainly

‘ A most beautiful Pagan—a most sweet Jew.’

She cannot be called a sketch—or if a sketch, she is like one of those dashed off in glowing colors from the rainbow palette of a Rubens; she has a rich tinge of Orientalism shed over her, worthy of her Eastern origin. In any other play, and in any other companionship than that of the matchless Portia, Jessica would make a very beautiful heroine of herself. Nothing can be more poetically, more classically fanciful and elegant than the scenes between her and Lorenzo—the celebrated moonlight dialogue, for instance, which we all have by heart. Every sentiment she utters interests us for her, more particularly her bashful self-reproach when flying in the disguise of a page. . . . And the enthusiastic and generous testimony to the superior graces and accomplishments of Portia comes with a peculiar grace from her lips. We should not, however, easily pardon her for cheating her father with so much indifference, but for the perception that Shylock values his daughter far beneath his wealth.”—MRS. JAMESON, *Characteristics of Women*.

“The love scenes in *Romeo and Juliet* are grand, by reason of the tumult and ferment of the affections. . . . but for the calm and full contentment of luxurious ease in the enjoyment of a blissful consummation, there is no scene like this between little Jessica and her Lorenzo. By the way, he is surely quite as amenable to the charge of ‘pedantry’ as the ill-praised Portia [by Hazlitt]; for he talks sentiment and philosophy to his little wife like a professor in a college; whereas, in the hands of an inferior poet, he would have talked the common platitudes of the lovmaker. Lorenzo can, and very gracefully does, dally and sport with her in a contest of similes to their marriage-night, and very classical and pretty they are, Afterwards,

turning upon the full glory of the Italian moonlight, he breaks into that angelic rapture:—

‘How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!’

CHARLES COWDEN-CLARK, *Shakespeare Characters*.

#### NERISSA AND GRATIANO

“Nerissa is a fitting attendant-gentlewoman to Portia. She is lively, intelligent, and ever prompt to enter into the spirit of a plot, a disguise, or a playful equivoque, with her bridegroom-husband. . . .

“Of Madam Nerissa, however, be it rather more than surmised from indications given, that she is one of that clan who will keep her husband trotting, partly from legitimate and sex-honored exaction, and partly, perhaps, from liveliness of disposition; and, also, because he, being a good-natured fellow, will evidently spoil her. . . .

“That husband, Gratiano, is a most delightful and most natural character. He is one of those useful men in society who will keep up the ball of mirth and good-humor, simply by his own mercurial temperament and agreeable rattle; for he is like a babbling, woodside brook, seen through at once, and presenting every ripple of its surface to the sunbeams of good-fellowship. .

. . . And, what is better than all, if a friend be in adversity, Gratiano will champion him with good words and deeds, if not with the most sagacious counsel.

“He would, no doubt, talk a man off his legs; and therefore Shakespeare has brought him as a relief against the two grave men, Antonio and Bassanio, who, being both anxious on account of worldly cares, resent his vivacity, and they are, at all events, as peevish as he is flippant and inconsiderate. Bassanio says of Gratiano that he ‘speaks an infinite deal of nothing’; that ‘his reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.’ The best of all

this is, that Bassanio himself advances no claim to be the censor of his lively companion, for, in comparison with him, he is dull in capacity, and the very observation just quoted follows one of the most agreeable and sensible speeches in the play, made by the infinite-deal-of-nothing Gratiano."—CHARLES COWDEN-CLARKE, *Shakespeare Characters*.

#### LAUNCELOT GOBBO

"And now, for a pleasant wind-up, talk we of Master Launcelot; or, Master Launcelot Gobbo; or, good Gobbo; or, good Master Launcelot Gobbo.

"In the old editions, Gobbo is called a clown, and in character he is a sort of mongrel between the thoroughbred jester-clown and the cur errand-boy. The vein of humor that distinguishes this class of persons must have been popular in Shakespeare's time, since he has repeated the character on various occasions. Launcelot is . . . a fellow who will scramble through the world with a 'light heart and a thin pair of inexpressibles.' His spare diet at the Jew's does not waste his humor, and conscience will scarcely sit heavily on him in the night-watches, since the gravest misdemeanor that can be laid to his charge is that he runs away from a master in whose service he swears he is 'famished'; his master's character of him being: 'The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder.' Nevertheless he says, 'You may tell every finger I have with my ribs.' And yet, with all this inducement, Launcelot sedately balances the question between his conscience to remain, and the temptation of Old Scratch to run away; and Old Scratch being right, for once, carries the debate."—CHARLES COWDEN-CLARKE, *Shakespeare Characters*.

## SHAKESPEARE'S GRAMMAR AND VERSIFICATION

Shakespeare lived at a time when the grammar and vocabulary of the English language were in a state of transition. Various points were not yet settled; and so Shakespeare's grammar is not only somewhat different from our own but is by no means uniform in itself. In the Elizabethan age, "Almost any part of speech can be used as any other part of speech. An adverb can be used as a verb, 'They *askance* their eyes'; as a noun, 'the *backward* and abysm of time'; or as an adjective, 'a *seldom* pleasure.' Any noun, adjective, or intransitive verb can be used as a transitive verb. You can 'happy' your friend, 'malice' or 'foot' your enemy, or 'fall' an axe on his neck. An adjective can be used as an adverb; and you can speak and act 'easy,' 'free,' 'excellent'; or as a noun, and you can talk of 'fair' instead of 'beauty,' and 'a pale' instead of 'a paleness.' Even the pronouns are not exempt from these metamorphoses. A 'he' is used for a man, and a lady is described by a gentleman as 'the fairest *she* he has yet beheld.' In the second place, every variety of apparent grammatical inaccuracy meets us. *He* for *him*, *him* for *he*; *spoke* and *took* for *spoken* and *taken*; plural nominatives with singular verbs; relatives omitted where they are now considered necessary; unnecessary antecedents inserted; *shall* for *will*, *should* for *would*, *would* for *wish*; *to* omitted after *I ought*, inserted after *I durst*; double negatives; double comparatives ('more better,' etc.) and superlatives; *such* followed by *which*, *that* by *as*, *as* used for *as if*; *that* for *so that*; and lastly some verbs apparently with two nominatives, and others without any nominative at all."—DR. ABBOTT'S *Shakespearian Grammar*.

Shakespeare's plays are written mainly in what is known as *blank verse*; but they contain a number of *riming lines*, and a con-

siderable number of prose lines. As a rule, rime is much commoner in the earlier than in the later plays. Thus, *Love's Labour's Lost* contains nearly 1100 riming lines, while (if we except the songs) *A Winter's Tale* has none. *The Merchant of Venice* has 124.

In speaking, we lay a stress on particular syllables; this stress is called *accent*. When the words of a composition are so arranged that the accent recurs at regular intervals, the composition is said to be *rythmical*. In blank verse the lines have usually ten syllables, of which the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth are accented. The line consists, therefore, of five parts, each of which contains an unaccented syllable, followed by an accented one, as in the word *attend*. Each of these five parts forms what is called a *foot* or *measure*; and the five together form a *pentameter*. *Pentameter* is a Greek word signifying "five measures." This is the usual form of a line of blank verse. But a long poem composed entirely of such lines would be monotonous, and for the sake of variety several important modifications have been introduced.

(a) After the tenth syllable, one or two unaccented syllables are sometimes added; as—

"Me-thought|you said|you nei|ther lend|nor bor|row."

(b) In any foot the accent may be shifted from the second to the first syllable, provided two accented syllables do not come together; as—

"Pluck' the|young suck'|ling cubs'|from the'|she bear'."

(c) In such words as *yesterday*, *voluntary*, *honesty*, the syllables *-day*, *-ta-*, and *-ty* falling in the place of the accent are, for the purposes of the verse, regarded as truly accented; as—

"Bars' me|the right'|of vol'|-un-ta'|ry choos'|ing."

(d) Sometimes we have a succession of accented syllables; this occurs with monosyllabic feet only; as—

'Why, now, blow wind, swell billow, and swim bark.'



(e) Sometimes, but more rarely, two or even three unaccented syllables occupy the place of one; as—

“He says|he does,|*be-ing* then|most flat|ter-ed.”

(f) Lines may have any number of feet from one to six.

Finally, Shakespeare adds much to the pleasing variety of his blank verse by placing the pauses in different parts of the line (especially after the second or third foot), instead of placing them all at the end of lines, as was the earlier custom.

In some cases the rhythm requires that what we usually pronounce as one syllable shall be divided into two, as *fi-er* (fire), *su-er* (sure), *mi-el* (mile), etc.; *too-elve* (twelve), *jaw-ee* (joy). Similarly, *she-on* (-tion or -sion).

It is very important that the student should have plenty of ear-training by means of formal scansion. This will greatly assist him in his reading.

## PLAN OF STUDY

To attain the standard of "Perfect Possession," the reader ought to have an intimate and ready knowledge of the subject.

The student ought, first of all, to read the play as a pleasure; then to read it again, with his mind on the characters and the plot; and lastly, to read it for the meanings, grammar, etc.

With the help of the following outline, he can easily draw up for himself short examination papers (1) on each scene, (2) on each act, (3) on the whole play.

### 1. The plot and story of the play.

(a) The general plot.

(b) The special incidents.

### 2. The characters.

Ability to give a connected account of all that is done, and most that is said by each character in the play.

### 3. The influence and interplay of the characters upon one another.

(a) Relation of A to B and of B to A.

(b) Relation of A to C and D.

### 4. Complete possession of the language.

(a) Meanings of words.

(b) Use of old words, or of words in an old meaning.

(c) Grammar.

(d) Ability to quote lines to illustrate a grammatical point.

### 5. Power to reproduce, or quote.

(a) What was said by A or B on a particular occasion.

(b) What was said by A in reply to B.

(c) What argument was used by C at a particular juncture.

(d) To quote a line in instance of an idiom or of a peculiar meaning.

6. Power to locate.

- (a) To attribute a line or statement to a certain person on a certain occasion.
- (b) To cap a line.
- (c) To fill in the right word or epithet.



# **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

- THE DUKE OF VENICE  
THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO  
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON } *suitors to Portia.*  
ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*  
BASSANIO, *friend to Antonio, suitor likewise to Portia.*  
SALANIO  
SALARINO } *friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*  
GRATIANO  
LORENZO, *in love with Jessica.*  
SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*  
TUBAL, *a Jew, friend to Shylock.*  
SALERIO, *a messenger.*  
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *a Clown, servant to Shylock.*  
Old GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*  
LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*  
BALTHAZAR } *servants to Portia.*  
STEPHANO  
PORTIA, *a rich heiress.*  
NERISSA, *waiting-maid to Portia.*  
JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*

*Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler,  
Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.*

SCENE—*Partly at VENICE; and partly at BELMONT, the seat  
of Portia, on the Continent.*

# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

## ACT I

### SCENE I

*Venice. A street*

*Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO*

*Ant.* In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:  
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn;

And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

*Salar.* Your mind is tossing on the ocean;  
There, where your argosies with portly sail,—  
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,  
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,—  
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,  
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,  
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

*Salan.* Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;

10

Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;  
And every object that might make me fear 20  
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,  
Would make me sad.

*Salar.* My wind, cooling my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.  
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run  
But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs  
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
And see the holy edifice of stone, 30  
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,  
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,  
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,  
And, in a word, but even now worth this,  
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought  
To think on this; and shall I lack the thought  
That such a thing, bechanced, would make me sad?  
But tell not me; I know Antonio  
Is sad to think upon his merchandise. 40

*Ant.* Believe me, no; I thank my fortune for it,  
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,  
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate  
Upon the fortune of this present year:  
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

*Salar.* Why, then you are in love.

*Ant.*

Fie, fie!



*Salar.* Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,

Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy  
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,  
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus, 50  
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,  
And laugh, like parrots, at a bag-piper;  
And other of such vinegar aspect  
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

*Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO*

*Salan.* Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,

Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:  
We leave you now with better company.

*Salar.* I would have stay'd till I had made you merry, 60  
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

*Ant.* Your worth is very dear in my regard.  
I take it, your own business calls on you,  
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

*Salar.* Good morrow, my good lords.

*Bass.* Good signiors both, when shall we laugh?  
Say, when?

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

*Salar.* We'll make our leisuress to attend on yours.

[*Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO*

*Lor.* My lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,

We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,  
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

70

*Bass.* I will not fail you.

*Gra.* You look not well, Signior Antonio;  
You have too much respect upon the world:  
They lose it that do buy it with much care.  
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

*Ant.* I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;  
A stage where every man must play a part,  
And mine a sad one.

*Gra.* Let me play the Fool:  
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come; 80  
And let my liver rather heat with wine  
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.  
Why should a man whose blood is warm within  
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?  
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice  
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,—  
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks,—  
There are a sort of men whose visages  
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;  
And do a wilful stillness entertain, 90  
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion  
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;  
As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,  
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!'  
O my Antonio, I do know of these  
That therefore only are reputed wise  
For saying nothing; who I am very sure,  
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

I'll tell thee more of this another time:

100

But fish not, with this melancholy bait,

For this fool-gudgeon, this opinion.

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well a while:

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

*Lor.* Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time:

I must be one of these same dumb wise men,

For Gratiano never lets me speak.

*Gra.* Well, keep me company but two years  
moe,

Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

*Ant.* Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear. 110

*Gra.* Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable

In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO*

*Ant.* Is that any thing now?

*Bass.* Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

*Ant.* Well, tell me now, what lady is the same  
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,  
That you to-day promised to tell me of? 120

*Bass.* 'Tis not unknown to you; Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate,  
By something showing a more swelling port

Than my faint means would grant continuance:  
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged  
From such a noble rate; but my chief care  
Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,  
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,  
I owe the most, in money and in love;  
And from your love I have a warranty  
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,  
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

130

*Ant.* I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;  
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,  
Within the eye of honour, be assured  
My purse, my person, my extremest means  
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

*Bass.* In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,<sup>140</sup>  
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self-same way, with more advisèd watch,  
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both  
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost: but if you please  
To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both  
Or bring your latter hazard back again,  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

150

*Ant.* You know me well; and herein spend but  
time

To wind about my love with circumstance;  
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong  
In making question of my uttermost  
Than if you had made waste of all I have.  
Then do but say to me what I should do,  
That in your knowledge may by me be done,  
And I am prest unto it: therefore speak. 160

*Bass.* In Belmont is a lady richly left;  
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,  
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes  
I did receive fair speechless messages.  
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renownèd suitors; and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece; 170  
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,  
And many Jasons come in quest of her.  
O my Antonio! had I but the means  
To hold a rival place with one of them,  
I have a mind presages me such thrift,  
That I should questionless be fortunate.

*Ant.* Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;  
Neither have I money nor commodity  
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;  
Try what my credit can in Venice do: 180  
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,  
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.  
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,

Where money is; and I no question make  
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [Exeunt

## SCENE II

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA*

*Por.* By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is  
awearied of this great world.

*Ner.* You would be, sweet madam, if your  
miseries were in the same abundance as your good  
fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as  
sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve  
with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, to  
be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by  
white hairs, but competency lives longer.

*Por.* Good sentences, and well pronounced. 10

*Ner.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Por.* If to do were as easy as to know what were  
good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor  
men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine  
that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach  
twenty what were good to be done than be one of  
the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain  
may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper  
leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness  
the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel 20  
the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion  
to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'!  
I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom

I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

*Ner.* Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead (whereof who chooses 30 his meaning chooses you) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

*Por.* I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

*Ner.* First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

*Por.* Ay, that's a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great ap- 40 propriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

*Ner.* Then is there the County Palatine.

*Por.* He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, 'An you will not have me, choose'; he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these 50 two!

*Ner.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

*Por.* God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker. But he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man: if a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering; he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for, if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him. 60

*Ner.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

*Por.* You know I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour every where. 70

*Ner.* What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

*Por.* That he hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another. 80

*Ner.* How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?



*Por.* Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

*Ner.* If he should offer to choose, and choose 90  
the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

*Por.* Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket: for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

*Ner.* You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their 100  
determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

*Por.* If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I wish them a fair departure. 110

*Ner.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

*Por.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

*Ner.* True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

*Por.* I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise. How now! what news? 120

*Enter a Serving-man*

*Serv.* The four strangers seek you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word the prince his master will be here to-night.

*Por.* If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. 130

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. *[Exeunt]*

### SCENE III

*Venice. A public place*

*Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK*

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats,—well.

*Bass.* Ay, sir, for three months.

*Shy.* For three months,—well.

*Bass.* For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

*Shy.* Antonio shall become bound,—well.

*Bass.* May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

10

*Bass.* Your answer to that.

*Shy.* Antonio is a good man.

*Bass.* Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

*Shy.* Ho! no, no, no, no: my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England; and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves;—I mean, pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond.

*Bass.* Be assured you may.

*Shy.* I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

30

*Bass.* If it please you to dine with us.

*Shy.* Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation

which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.—What news on the Rialto?—Who is he comes here?

*Enter ANTONIO*

*Bass.* This is signior Antonio.

*Shy.* [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks! 40

I hate him for he is a Christian;  
But more for that, in low simplicity  
He lends out money gratis, and brings down  
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.  
If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.  
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,  
Even there where merchants most do congregate,  
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,  
Which he calls interest. Cursèd be my tribe 50  
If I forgive him!

*Bass.* Shylock, do you hear?

*Shy.* I am debating of my present store;  
And, by the near guess of my memory,  
I cannot instantly raise up the gross  
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?  
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,  
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months  
Do you desire?—[*To ANT.*] Rest you fair, good  
signior:

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

*Ant.* Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow 60  
By taking nor by giving of excess,  
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,  
I'll break a custom.—[*To Bass.*] Is he yet possess'd  
How much you would?

*Shy.* Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

*Ant.* And for three months.

*Shy.* I had forgot,—three months; you told me  
so.

Well then, your bond; and, let me see—but hear you:  
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow  
Upon advantage.

*Ant.* I do never use it.

*Shy.* When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's  
sheep,—

70

This Jacob from our holy Abram was  
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)  
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—

*Ant.* And what of him? did he take interest?

*Shy.* No, not take interest; not, as you would say,  
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.

When Laban and himself were compromised,  
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied  
Should fall as Jacob's hire,

The skilful shepherd pilled me certain wands; 80  
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,  
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time  
Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.  
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;

And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

*Ant.* This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;  
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.  
Was this inserted to make interest good?  
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams? 90

*Shy.* I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.  
But note me, signior.

*Ant.* Mark you this Bassanio,  
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
An evil soul, producing holy witness,  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:  
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats,—'tis a good round  
sum.

Three months from twelve,—then, let me see; the  
rate—

*Ant.* Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to  
you? 100

*Shy.* Signior Antonio, many a time and oft  
In the Rialto you have rated me  
About my moneys and my usances:  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;  
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.  
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat-dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And all for use of that which is mine own.  
Well then, it now appears you need my help:  
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say, 110

'Shylock, we would have money': you say so;  
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.  
What should I say to you? Should I not say,  
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or  
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
Say this,—

120

'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;  
You spurn'd me such a day; another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'

*Ant.* I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take  
A breed of barren metal of his friend?  
But lend it rather to thine enemy;  
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalty.

130

*Shy.* Why, look you, how you storm!  
I would be friends with you, and have your love;  
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with;  
Supply your present wants, and take no doit  
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear  
me:

This is kind I offer.

*Bass.* This were kindness.

*Shy.* This kindness will I show:  
Go with me to a notary; seal me there  
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport, 140  
If you repay me not on such a day,  
In such a place, such sum or sums as are  
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit  
Be nominated for an equal pound  
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

*Ant.* Content, in faith; I'll seal to such a bond,  
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

*Bass.* You shall not seal to such a bond for  
me;  
I'll rather dwell in my necessity. 150

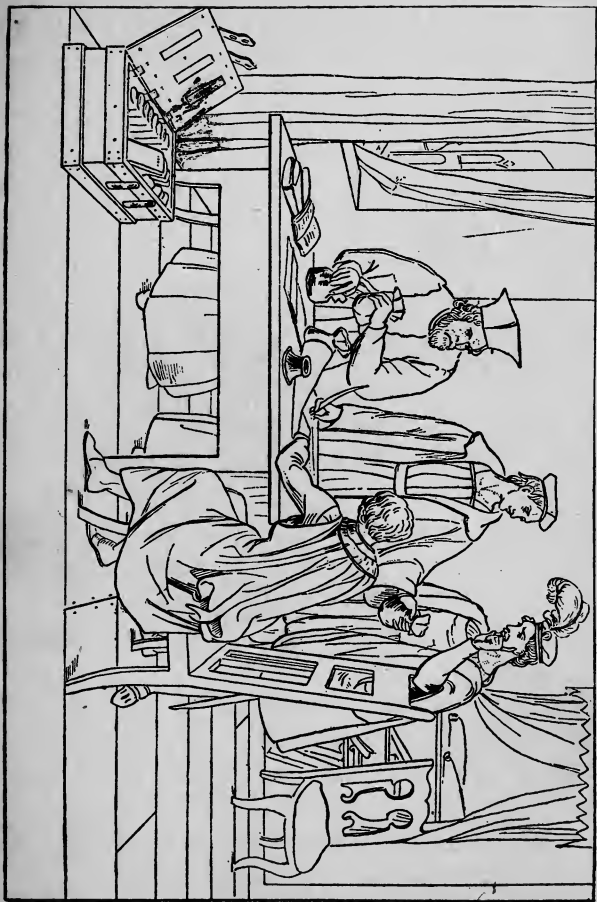
*Ant.* Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit  
it;  
Within these two months, that's a month before  
This bond expires, I do expect return  
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

*Shy.* O Father Abram, what these Christians  
are,

Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this:  
If he should break his day, what should I gain  
By the exaction of the forfeiture?

A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man, 160  
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,  
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,  
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship;  
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;





THE SIGNING OF THE BOND

And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

*Ant.* Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

*Shy.* Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;  
Give him direction for this merry bond,  
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;  
See to my house, left in the fearful guard  
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently  
I will be with you. 170

[*Exit*

*Ant.* Hie thee, gentle Jew.

The Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

*Bass.* I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

*Ant.* Come on; in this there can be no dismay;  
My ships come home a month before the day.

[*Exeunt*

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, and his Train; PORTIA, NERISSA, and others attending*

*Mor.* Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour, and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,  
And let us make incision for your love,  
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.  
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love, I swear  
The best-regarded virgins of our clime  
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

1

*Por.* In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;  
Besides, the lottery of my destiny  
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:  
But, if my father had not scanted me,  
And hedged me by his wit to yield myself  
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,  
Yourself, renown'd prince, then stood as fair  
As any comer I have look'd on yet,  
For my affection.

20

*Mor.* Even for that I thank you;  
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets  
To try my fortune. By this scimitar  
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince  
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,  
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,  
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,  
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,  
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey, 30  
To win the lady. But, alas the while!  
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice  
Which is the better man, the greater throw  
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:  
So is Alcides beaten by his page;  
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,  
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,  
And die with grieving.

*Por.* You must take your chance;  
And either not attempt to choose at all,  
Or, swear before you choose, if you choose wrong 40  
Never to speak to lady afterward  
In way of marriage; therefore be advised.

*Mor.* Nor will not; come, bring me unto my  
chance.

*Por.* First, forward to the temple; after dinner  
Your hazard shall be made.

*Mor.* Good fortune then!  
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets. Exeunt*

## SCENE II

*Venice. A street**Enter LAUNCELOT*

*Laun.* Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,'—or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;—well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well'; 'fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well': to be ruled by my conscience I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and in my conscience,

my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will 30 run.

*Enter Old GOBBO with a basket*

*Gob.* Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Laun.* [*Aside.*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel-blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

*Gob.* Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

*Laun.* Turn up on your right hand at the next 40 turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

*Gob.* By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

*Laun.* Talk you of young Master Launcelot?— [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. —Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

*Gob.* No *master*, sir, but a poor man's son: his 50 father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

*Laun.* Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

*Gob.* Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

*Laun.* But I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

*Gob.* Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

*Laun.* *Ergo*, Master Launcelot; talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman (according to Fates and Destinies, and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three, and such branches of learning) is indeed, deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven. 60

*Gob.* Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

*Laun.* [*Aside*] Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop?—Do you know me, father?

*Gob.* Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy—God rest his soul!—alive or dead? 70

*Laun.* Do you not know me, father?

*Gob.* Alack, sir, I am sand-blind, I know you not.

*Laun.* Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out. 80

*Gob.* Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

*Laun.* Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing; I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

*Gob.* I cannot think you are my son.

*Laun.* I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

*Gob.* Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, 90  
if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

*Laun.* It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face, when I last saw him.

*Gob.* Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now? 100

*Laun.* Well, well; but for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground.—O rare fortune! here comes the man;—to him, father; 110  
for I am a Jew if I serve the Jew any longer.

*Enter BASSANIO with LEONARDO and  
other Followers*

*Bass.* You may do so; but let it be so hasted



that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [Exit a Servant

*Laun.* To him, father.

*Gob.* God bless your worship!

*Bass.* Gramercy! Wouldst thou aught with me? 120

*Gob.* Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

*Laun.* Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify,—

*Gob.* He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve,—

*Laun.* Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify,—

*Gob.* His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins;— 130

*Laun.* To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

*Gob.* I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is,—

*Laun.* In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father. 140

*Bass.* One speak for both—What would you?

*Laun.* Serve you, sir.

*Gob.* That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

*Bass.* I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit:  
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,  
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment  
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

*Laun.* The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have 150  
the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

*Bass.* Thou speak'st it well.—Go, father, with thy son.—

Take leave of thy old master, and inquire  
My lodging out.—[*to his Followers*] Give him a livery  
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

*Laun.* Father, in.—I cannot get a service, no!  
I have ne'er a tongue in my head!—Well [*looking on his palm*], if any man in Italy have a fairer table  
which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have  
good fortune! Go to; here's a simple line of life! 160  
here's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is  
nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple  
coming-in for one man; and then to 'scape drowning  
thrice,—and to be in peril of my life with the edge of  
a feather-bed,—here are simple 'scapes! Well, if  
fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this  
gear.—Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew  
in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt LAUNCELOT and Old GOBBO*]

*Bass.* I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:

These things being bought and orderly bestow'd, 170  
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night

My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go.

*Leon.* My best endeavours shall be done herein.

*Enter GRATIANO*

*Gra.* Where is your master?

*Leon.* Yonder, sir, he walks.

[*Exit*

*Gra.* Signior Bassanio,—

*Bass.* Gratiano!

*Gra.* I have a suit to you.

*Bass.* You have obtained it.

*Gra.* You must not deny me: I must go with  
you to Belmont.

*Bass.* Why, then you must. But hear thee,  
Gratiano:

180

Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice,—  
Parts that become thee happily enough,  
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;  
But where thou art not known, why, there they  
show

Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain  
To allay with some cold drops of modesty  
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild be-  
haviour,

I be misconstrued in the place I go to,  
And lose my hopes.

*Gra.* Signior Bassanio, hear me:  
If I do not put on a sober habit,

190

Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,  
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;  
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes  
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen';  
Use all the observance of civility,  
Like one well studied in a sad ostent  
To please his grandam,—never trust me more.

*Bass.* Well, we shall see your bearing.

*Gra.* Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gage  
me

By what we do to-night.

*Bass.* No, that were pity; 200  
I would entreat you rather to put on  
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends  
That purpose merriment. But fare you well;  
I have some business.

*Gra.* And I must to Lorenzo and the rest;  
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE III

*Venice. A room in Shylock's house*

*Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT*

*Jes.* I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;  
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,  
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.  
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.  
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see  
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:  
Give him this letter; do it secretly;

And so faréwell; I would not have my father  
See me in talk with thee.

*Laun.* Adieu!—tears exhibit my tongue. Most 10  
beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian do  
not play the knave and get thee, I am much de-  
ceived. But adieu: these foolish drops do some-  
what drown my manly spirit: adieu!

[*Exit* LAUNCELOT

*Jes.* Farewell, good Launcelot.  
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me  
To be ashamed to be my father's child!  
But though I am a daughter to his blood,  
I am not to his manners: O Lorenzo,  
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife; 20  
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit*

#### SCENE IV

*Venice. A street*

*Enter* GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO

*Lor.* Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,  
Disguise us at my lodging, and return  
All in an hour.

*Gra.* We have not made good preparation.

*Salar.* We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

*Salan.* 'Tis vile unless it may be quaintly order'd;  
And better, in my mind, not undertook.

*Lor.* 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two  
hours  
To furnish us.—

*Enter LAUNCELOT with a letter*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

*Laun.* An it shall please you to break up this, 10  
it shall seem to signify.

*Lor.* I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

*Gra.* Love-news, in faith.

*Laun.* By your leave, sir.

*Lor.* Whither goest thou?

*Laun.* Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew  
to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

*Lor.* Hold here, take this:—tell gentle Jessica  
I will not fail her; speak it privately;

Go.—Gentlemen, *[Exit LAUN. 20*

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

*Salar.* Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

*Solan.* And so will I.

*Lor.* Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

*Salar.* 'Tis good we do so.

*[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO*

*Gra.* Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

*Lor.* I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed 30  
How I shall take her from her father's house;  
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;  
What page's suit she hath in readiness.  
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;  
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,  
Unless she do it under this excuse,—  
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.  
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:  
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE V

*Venice. Before Shylock's house*

*Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT*

*Shy.* Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy  
judge,  
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—  
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize,  
As thou hast done with me;—What, Jessica!—  
And sleep and snore and rend apparel out;—  
Why, Jessica, I say!

*Laun.* Why, Jessica!

*Shy.* Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

*Laun.* Your worship was wont to tell me I could  
do nothing without bidding.

*Enter JESSICA*

*Jes.* Call you? What is your will?

10

*Shy.* I am bid forth to supper, Jessica;  
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?  
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:  
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon

The prodigal Christian.—Jessica, my girl,  
Look to my house.—I am right loth to go;  
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,  
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

*Laun.* I beseech you, sir, go; my young master  
doth expect your reproach. 20

*Shy.* So do I his.

*Laun.* And they have conspired together,—I will  
not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it  
was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on  
Black-Monday last, at six o'clock i' the morning,  
falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four  
year in the afternoon.

*Shy.* What! are there masques? Hear you me,  
Jessica:

Lock up my doors; and, when you hear the drum  
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife, 30  
Clamber not you up to the casements then,  
Nor thrust your head into the public street  
To gaze on Christain fools with varnish'd faces;  
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements;  
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter  
My sober house.—By Jacob's staff, I swear  
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:  
But I will go.—Go you before me, sirrah;  
Say I will come.

*Laun.* I will go before, sir.—  
Mistress, look out at window, for all this; 40

There will come a Christian by,  
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

[Exit



*Shy.* What says that fool of Hagar's offspring;  
ha?

*Jes.* His words were 'Farewell, mistress'; nothing  
else.

*Shy.* The patch is kind enough; but a huge  
feeder.

Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day  
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me;  
Therefore I part with him; and part with him  
To one that I would have him help to waste  
His borrow'd purse.—Well, Jessica, go in;  
Perhaps I will return immediately;  
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:  
Fast bind, fast find,—

50

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. *[Exit*

*Jes.* Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,  
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. *[Exit*

## SCENE VI

*The same.*

*Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued*

*Gra.* This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo  
Desired us to make stand.

*Salar.* His hour is almost past.

*Gra.* And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,  
For lovers ever run before the clock.

*Salar.* O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly  
To seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont  
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

*Gra.* That ever holds: who riseth from a feast  
With that keen appetite that he sits down?  
Where is the horse that doth untread again 10  
His tedious measures with the unbated fire  
That he did pace them first? All things that are,  
Are with more spirit chasèd than enjoy'd.  
How like a younker or a prodigal  
The scarfèd bark puts from her native bay,  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!  
How like a prodigal doth she return,  
With over-weather'd ribs, and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!  
*Salar.* Here comes Lorenzo; more of this here-  
after. 20

*Enter LORENZO*

*Lor.* Sweet friends, your patience for my long  
abode;  
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:  
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,  
I'll watch as long for you then.—Approach;  
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! who's within?

*Enter JESSICA, above, in boy's clothes*

*Jes.* Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,  
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

*Lor.* Lorenzo, and thy love.

*Jes.* Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;  
For who love I so much? and now who knows 30  
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

*Lor.* Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that  
thou art.

*Jes.* Here, catch this casket; it is worth the  
pains.

I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,  
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:  
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see  
The pretty follies that themselves commit;  
For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush  
To see me thus transformèd to a boy.

*Lor.* Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer. 40

*Jes.* What, must I hold a candle to my shames?  
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.  
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;  
And I should be obscured.

*Lor.* So you are, sweet,  
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.  
But come at once;  
For the close night doth play the runaway,  
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

*Jes.* I will make fast the doors, and gild myself  
With some more ducats, and be with you straight. 50

*[Exit above]*

*Gra.* Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

*Lor.* Beshrew me, but I love her heartily:  
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;  
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;  
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;  
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,  
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

*Enter JESSICA, below*

What, art thou come?—On, gentlemen; away!  
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

*[Exit, with JESSICA and SALARINO]*

*Enter ANTONIO*

*Ant.* Who's there?

60

*Gra.* Signior Antonio?

*Ant.* Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?  
'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.  
No masque to-night; the wind is come about;  
Bassanio presently will go aboard:  
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

*Gra.* I am glad on't; I desire no more delight  
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

*[Exeunt]*

## SCENE VII

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

*Flourish of Cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE  
OF MOROCCO, and both their Trains*

*Por.* Go, draw aside the curtains, and discover  
The several caskets to this noble prince.—  
Now make your choice.

*Mor.* The first, of gold, who this inscription  
bears:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.  
The second, silver, which this promise carries:  
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt:

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

How shall I know if I do choose the right? 10

*Por.* The one of them contains my picture,  
prince;

If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

*Mor.* Some god direct my judgement! Let me see;  
I will survey the inscriptions back again.  
What says this leaden casket?

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

Must give—for what? for lead? hazard for lead?

This casket threatens: men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages:

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; 20

I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

As much as he deserves?—Pause there, Morocco,

And weigh thy value with an even hand:

If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady:

And yet to be afraid of my deserving

Were but a weak disabling of myself. 30

As much as I deserve!—Why, that's the lady:

I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,

In graces, and in qualities of breeding;

But more than these, in love I do deserve.

What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?—  
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her:  
From the four corners of the earth they come  
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint. 40

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds  
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now,  
For princes to come view fair Portia!  
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head  
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar  
To stop the foreign spirits; but they come,  
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.

One of these three contains her heavenly picture.  
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation  
To think so base a thought: it were too gross 50  
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.  
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,  
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?

O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem  
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England  
A coin that bears the figure of an angel  
Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon;  
But here an angel in a golden bed  
Lies all within.—Deliver me the key;  
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may! 60

*Por.* There, take it, prince; and, if my form lie  
there,

Then I am yours.

[*He unlocks the golden casket*  
*Mor.* O hell! what have we here?

A carrion death, within whose empty eye  
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

All that glisters is not gold;  
Often have you heard that told:  
Many a man his life hath sold  
But my outside to behold:  
Gilded tombs do worms infold.  
Had you been as wise as bold,  
Young in limbs, in judgement old,  
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:  
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

70

Cold, indeed; and labour lost:

Then, farewell, heat; and welcome, frost!—  
Portia, adieu! I have too grieved a heart  
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

*[Exit, with his Train. Flourish of cornets.]*

*Por.* A gentle riddance.—Draw the curtains;  
go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so. *[Exeunt]*

## SCENE VIII

*Venice. A street*

*Enter SALARINO and SALANIO*

*Salar.* Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;  
With him is Gratiano gone along;  
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

*Salan.* The villain Jew with outcries raised the  
duke;  
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship,

*Salar.* He came too late, the ship was under sail:  
But there the duke was given to understand  
That in a gondola were seen together  
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica;  
Besides, Antonio certified the duke  
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

10

*Salan.* I never heard a passion so confused,  
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,  
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:  
'My daughter!—O my ducats!—O my daughter!  
Fled with a Christian?—O my Christian ducats!—  
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!  
A sealèd bag, two sealèd bags of ducats,  
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!  
And jewels; two stones, two rich and precious stones,  
Stolen by my daughter!—Justice! find the girl!  
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!'

20

*Salar.* Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,  
Crying—'his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.'

*Salan.* Let good Antonio look he keep his day,  
Or he shall pay for this.

*Salar.* Marry, well remember'd.  
I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,  
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part  
The French and English, there miscarried  
A vessel of our country, richly fraught:  
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,  
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

30

*Salan.* You were best to tell Antonio what you  
hear;



Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

*Salar.* A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.  
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:  
Bassanio told him he would make some speed  
Of his return: he answered—'Do not so,  
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,  
But stay the very riping of the time;  
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,  
Let it not enter in your mind of love;  
Be merry; and employ your chiefest thoughts  
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love  
As shall conveniently become you there.'  
And even there, his eye being big with tears,  
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,  
And with affection wondrous sensible  
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

40

*Salan.* I think he only loves the world for him. 50  
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,  
And quicken his embracèd heaviness  
With some delight or other.

*Salar.* Do we so. [*Exeunt*

## SCENE IX

*Belmont.* A room in Portia's house

*Enter NERISSA with a Servitor*

*Ner.* Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain  
straight;

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,  
And comes to his election presently.

*Flourish of Cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON,  
PORTIA, and their Trains*

*Por.* Behold, there stand the caskets, noble  
prince;

If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,  
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:  
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,  
You must be gone from hence immediately.

*Ar.* I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:  
First, never to unfold to any one  
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail  
Of the right casket, never in my life  
To woo a maid in way of marriage;  
Lastly, if I do fail in fortune of my choice,  
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

10

*Por.* To these injunctions every one doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

*Ar.* And so have I address'd me. Fortune now  
To my heart's hope!—Gold, silver, and base lead.

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

20

You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard.  
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

What many men desire! That *many* may be meant  
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach,  
Which pries not to th'interior, but, like the martlet,  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,

Even in the force and road of casualty.

I will not choose what many men desire,

30

Because I will not jump with common spirits,

And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.

Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;

Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

And well said too; for who shall go about

To cozen fortune, and be honourable

Without the stamp of merit! Let none presume

To wear an undeservèd dignity.

O, that estates, degrees, and offices

40

Were not derived corruptly! and that clear honour

Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!

How many then should cover that stand bare!

How many be commanded that command!

How much low peasantry would then be glean'd

From the true seed of honour! and how much honour

Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,

To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

I will assume desert.—Give me a key for this,

50

And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

*[He opens the silver casket*

*Por.* Too long a pause for that which you find there.

*Ar.* What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot, Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.

How much unlike art thou to Portia!

How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.

Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?

Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

*Por.* To offend and judge are distinct offices  
And of opposèd natures.

60

*Ar.*

What is here?

[*Reads*]

The fire seven times tried this:

Seven times tried that judgement is,

That did never choose amiss:

Some there be that shadows kiss;

Such have but a shadow's bliss:

There be fools alive, I wis,

Silver'd o'er; and so was this.

Take what wife you will to bed,

I will ever be your head:

70

So begone: you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear

By the time I linger here:

With one fool's head I came to woo,

But I go away with two.

Sweet, adieu! I'll keep my oath,

Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt* ARRAGON and Train

*Por.* Thus hath the candle singed the moth.

O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,

They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

80

*Ner.* The ancient saying is no heresy,—  
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

*Por.* Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

*Enter a Servant*

*Serv.* Where is my lady?

*Por.* Here: what would my lord?

*Serv.* Madam, there is alighted at your gate  
A young Venetian, one that comes before  
To signify the approaching of his lord,  
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;  
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,  
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen  
So likely an ambassador of love:

90

A day in April never came so sweet,  
To show how costly summer was at hand,  
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

*Por.* No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard  
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,  
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.  
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see  
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

*Ner.* Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

100

*[Exeunt]*

## ACT III

### SCENE I

*Venice. A street*

*Enter SALANIO and SALARINO*

*Salan.* Now, what news on the Rialto?

*Salar.* Why, yet it lives there unchecked, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas,—the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

*Salan.* I would she were as lying a gossip in that, as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But 10 it is true,—without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk,—that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

*Salar.* Come, the full stop.

*Salan.* Ha! what say'st thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

*Salar.* I would it might prove the end of his losses!

*Salan.* Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness 20 of a Jew.

*Enter SHYLOCK*

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

*Shy.* You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

*Salar.* That's certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

*Salan.* And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

30

*Shy.* She is damned for it.

*Salar.* That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

*Shy.* My own flesh and blood to rebel!

*Salan.* Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

*Shy.* I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.

*Salar.* There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods, than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

40

*Shy.* There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar that was used to come so smug upon the mart. Let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

*Salar.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt 50  
not take his flesh: what's that good for?

*Shy.* To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing  
else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced  
me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at  
my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation,  
thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated  
mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a  
Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands,  
organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? 60  
fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons,  
subject to the same diseases, healed by the same  
means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and  
summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we  
not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? if  
you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us,  
shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest,  
we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a  
Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a  
Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be  
by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany 70  
you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard  
but I will better the instruction.

*Enter a Servant*

*Serv.* Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his  
house, and desires to speak with you both.

*Salar.* We have been up and down to seek him.

*Enter TUBAL*

*Salan.* Here comes another of the tribe; a



third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt* SALANIO, SALARINO, and Servant

*Shy.* How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter? 80

*Tub.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

*Shy.* Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them?—Why, 90 so:—and I know not what's spent in the search. Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing; no tears but o' my shedding.

*Tub.* Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

*Shy.* What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

*Tub.* —hath an argosy cast away, coming from 100 Tripolis.

*Shy.* I thank God, I thank God!—is it true, is it true?

*Tub.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

*Shy.* I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha!—here in Genoa.

*Tub.* Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

*Shy.* Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never 110  
see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting!  
fourscore ducats!

*Tub.* There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

*Shy.* I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

*Tub.* One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shy.* Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: 120  
it was my turquoise: I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

*Tub.* But Antonio is certainly undone.

*Shy.* Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before: I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, 130  
Tubal.

[*Exeunt*

## SCENE II

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

*Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants*

*Por.* I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two  
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
I lose your company; therefore, forbear awhile.  
There's something tells me—but it is not love—  
I would not lose you; and you know yourself  
Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
But lest you should not understand me well,—  
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—  
I would detain you here some month or two  
Before you venture for me. I could teach you      10  
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;  
So will I never be: so may you miss me;  
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,  
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;  
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,—  
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,  
And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
Put bars between the owners and their rights!  
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,      20  
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,  
To eke it and to draw it out in length,  
To stay you from election.

*Bass.*

Let me choose;

For, as I am, I live upon the rack.

*Por.* Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess  
What treason there is mingled with your love.

*Bass.* None but that ugly treason of mistrust,  
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:  
There may as well be amity and life  
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love. 30

*Por.* Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,  
Where men enforced do speak any thing.

*Bass.* Promise me life, and I'll confess the  
truth.

*Por.* Well, then, confess and live.

*Bass.* Confess and love  
Had been the very sum of my confession:  
O happy torment, when my torturer  
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!  
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

*Por.* Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them: 40  
If you do love me, you will find me out.  
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.  
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;  
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,  
Fading in music: that the comparison  
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream  
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;  
And what is music then? Then music is  
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow  
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is, 50  
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day  
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear

And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,  
With no less presence, but with much more love,  
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem  
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy  
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;  
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,  
With bleared visages, come forth to view  
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!  
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay  
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.

60

*Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself*

## SONG

Tell me where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart or in the head.  
How begot, how nourished.

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,  
With gazing fed; and fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell;

I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

70

*All.*            Ding, dong, bell.

*Bass.* So may the outward shows be least themselves:

The world is still deceived with ornament.  
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt  
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,  
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,  
What damnèd error, but some sober brow

Will bless it and approve it with a text,  
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament? 80  
There is no vice so simple but assumes  
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.  
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false  
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins  
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,  
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;  
And these assume but valour's excrement  
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,  
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;  
Which therein works a miracle in nature, 90  
Making them lightest that wear most of it:  
So are those crispèd snaky golden locks  
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,  
Upon supposèd fairness, often known  
To be the dowry of a second head,  
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.  
Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore  
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf  
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,  
The seeming truth which cunning times put on 100  
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,  
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee:  
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
'Tween man and man. But thou, thou meagre lead,  
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,  
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;  
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

*Por.* [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,

As doubtful thoughts and rash-embraced despair  
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!      110  
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;  
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess.  
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,  
For fear I surfeit!

*Bass.*                      What find I here?

*[Opening the leaden casket]*

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god  
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?  
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,  
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar  
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs      120  
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven  
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men,  
Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes!—  
How could he see to do them? having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,  
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far  
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow  
In underprizing it, so far this shadow  
Doth limp behind the substance.—Here's the scroll,  
The continent and summary of my fortune.      130

You that choose not by the view,  
Chance as fair, and choose as true!  
Since this fortune falls to you,  
Be content, and seek no new.  
If you be well pleased with this  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn you where your lady is  
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll.—Fair lady, by your leave:

[*Kissing her*

I come by note, to give and to receive. 140  
Like one of two contending in a prize,  
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
Hearing applause and universal shout,  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;  
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;  
As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

*Por.* You see me, lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
Such as I am: though for myself alone 150  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better; yet for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself:  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
More rich;  
That, only to stand high in your account,  
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,  
Exceed account: but the full sum of me  
Is sum of—something, which, to term in gross,  
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised: 160  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn; happier than this,  
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;  
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit  
Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
Myself and what is mine to you and yours



Is now converted: but now I was the lord  
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,  
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now, 170  
This house, these servants, and this same myself  
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;  
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
Let it presage the ruin of your love,  
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Bass.* Madam, you have bereft me of all words;  
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:  
And there is such confusion in my powers  
As, after some oration fairly spoke  
By a belovèd prince, there doth appear 180  
Among the buzzing, pleasèd multitude;  
Where every something, being blent together,  
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,  
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring  
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;  
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

*Ner.* My lord and lady, it is now our time,  
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,  
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

*Gra.* My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady, 190  
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;  
For I am sure you can wish none from me:  
And when your honours mean to solemnize  
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you  
Even at that time I may be married too.

*Bass.* With all my heart, so thou canst get a  
wife.

*Gra.* I thank your lordship; you have got me one.

My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:  
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;  
You loved, I loved; for intermission  
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.  
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there;  
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;  
For wooing here until I sweat again,  
And swearing till my very roof was dry  
With oaths of love, at last,—if promise last,—  
I got a promise of this fair one here  
To have her love, provided that your fortune  
Achieved her mistress.

*Por.* Is this true, Nerissa?

*Ner.* Madame, it is, so you stand pleased withal. 210

*Bass.* And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

*Gra.* Yes, faith, my lord.

*Bass.* Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

*Gra.* But who comes here? Lorenzo, and his infidel?

What, and my old Venetian friend, Salerio?

*Enter* LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO

*Bass.* Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;  
If that the youth of my new interest here  
Have power to bid you welcome.—By your leave,  
I bid my very friends and countrymen,  
Sweet Portia, welcome.

*Por.* So do I, my lord; 220

They are entirely welcome.

*Lor.* I thank your honour.—For my part, my lord,

My purpose was not to have seen you here;

But meeting with Salerio by the way,

He did entreat me, past all saying nay,

To come with him along.

*Salerio.* I did, my lord;

And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio

Commends him to you. [*Gives BASSANIO a letter*

*Bass.* Ere I ope this letter,

I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

*Salerio.* Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind; 230

Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there

Will show you his estate.

*Gra.* Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.—

Your hand, Salerio. What's the news from Venice?

How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?

I know he will be glad of our success;

We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

*Salerio.* I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!

*Por.* There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,

That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek: 240

Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world

Could turn so much the constitution

Of any constant man. What, worse and worse?—

With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,  
And I must freely have the half of any thing  
That this same paper brings you.

*Bass.* O sweet Portia,  
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words  
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,  
When I did first impart my love to you,  
I freely told you, all the wealth I had 250  
Ran in my veins,—I was a gentleman;  
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,  
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see  
How much I was a braggart. When I told you  
My state was nothing, I should then have told you  
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,  
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,  
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,  
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;  
The paper as the body of my friend, 260  
And every word in it a gaping wound,  
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?  
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,  
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?  
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch  
Of merchant-marring rocks?

*Salerio.* Not one, my lord.  
Besides, it should appear that, if he had  
The present money to discharge the Jew,  
He would not take it. Never did I know 270  
A creature that did bear the shape of man,

So keen and greedy to confound a man:  
He plies the duke at morning and at night;  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,  
The duke himself, and the magnificoes  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

*Jes.* When I was with him, I have heard him swear

280

To Tubal, and to Chus, his countrymen,  
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh  
Than twenty times the value of the sum  
That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,  
If law, authority, and power deny not,  
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

*Por.* Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

*Bass.* The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,  
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit  
In doing courtesies; and one in whom  
The ancient Rôman honour more appears  
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

290

*Por.* What sum owes he the Jew?

*Bass.* For me three thousand ducats.

*Por.* What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;  
Double six thousand, and then treble that,  
Before a friend of this description  
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.  
First go with me to church and call me wife,

And then away to Venice to your friend; 300  
For never shall you lie by Portia's side  
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold  
To pay the petty debt twenty times over;  
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.  
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime  
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!  
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:  
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:  
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.  
But let me hear the letter of your friend. 310

*Bass. [reads]*

Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

*Por.* O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

*Bass.* Since I have your good leave to go away,  
I will make haste: but, till I come again,  
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay, 320  
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt*

### SCENE III

*Venice. A street*

*Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Gaoler*

*Shy.* Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy:  
This is the fool that lends out money gratis.  
Gaoler, look to him.

*Ant.* Hear me yet, good Shylock.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:

I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.  
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause:  
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:  
The duke shall grant me justice.—I do wonder,  
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request.

10

*Ant.* I pray thee, hear me speak.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:

I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.  
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,  
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield  
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;  
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond. *[Exit*

*Salar.* It is the most impenetrable cur  
That ever kept with men.

*Ant.* Let him alone:  
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.  
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:  
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures  
Many that have at times made moan to me;  
Therefore he hates me.

20

*Salar.* I am sure the duke  
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

*Ant.* The duke cannot deny the course of law;  
For the commodity that strangers have  
With us in Venice, if it be denied,

Will much impeach the justice of the state;  
Since that the trade and profit of the city  
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:  
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,  
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh  
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.  
Well, gaoler, on.—Pray God, Bassanio come  
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!

30

[*Exeunt*]

## SCENE IV

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

*Enter* PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and  
BALTHAZAR

*Lor.* Madam, although I speak it in your presence

You have a noble and a true conceit  
Of God-like amity; which appears most strongly  
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.  
But, if you knew to whom you show this honour,  
How true a gentleman you send relief,  
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,  
I know you would be prouder of the work  
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

*Por.* I never did repent for doing good,  
Nor shall not now: for in companions  
That do converse and waste the time together,  
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,  
There must be needs a like proportion  
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;

10



Which makes me think that this Antonio,  
Being the bosom lover of my lord,  
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,  
How little is the cost I have bestow'd  
In purchasing the semblance of my soul 20  
From out the state of hellish cruelty!  
This comes too near the praising of myself;  
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house  
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,  
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow  
To live in prayer and contemplation,  
Only attended by Nerissa here,  
Until her husband and my lord's return: 30  
There is a monastery two miles off,  
And there we will abide. I do desire you  
Not to deny this imposition,  
The which my love and some necessity  
Now lays upon you.

*Lor.*                               Madame, with all my heart,  
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

*Por.* My people do already know my mind,  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of lord Bassanio and myself.  
So fare you well till we shall meet again. 40

*Lor.* Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

*Jes.* I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

*Por.* I thank you for your wish, and am well  
pleased

To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt* JESSICA and LORENZO]

Now, Balthazar,

As I have ever found thee honest-true,

So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,

And use thou all the endeavour of a man

In speed to Padua; see thou render this

Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;

50

And, look, what notes and garments he doth give  
thee,

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed

Unto the tranect, to the common ferry

Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,

But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.

*Balth.* Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

[*Exit*]

*Por.* Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand  
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands  
Before they think of us.

*Ner.*

Shall they see us?

*Por.* They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit 60  
That they shall think we are accomplished  
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,  
When we are both accoutred like young men,  
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,  
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;  
And speak, between the change of man and boy,  
With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps  
Into a manly stride; and speak of frays,  
Like a fine-bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,

How honourable ladies sought my love,      70  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;  
I could not do withal: then I'll repent,  
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them;  
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,  
That men shall swear I've discontinued school  
Above a twelvemonth:—I have within my mind  
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,  
Which I will practise.  
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device  
When I am in my coach, which stays for us      80  
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,  
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt*]

## SCENE V

*The same. A garden*

*Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA*

*Laun.* Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer; for, truly, I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

*Jes.* And what hope is that, I pray thee?

*Laun.* Marry, you may partly hope that you are      10  
not the Jew's daughter.

*Jes.* That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed:

so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

*Laun.* Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother; well, you are gone both ways.

*Jes.* I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

20

*Laun.* Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

*Enter LORENZO*

*Jes.* I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes.

*Lor.* I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

30

*Jes.* Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo. Launcelot and I are out: he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says you are no good member of the commonwealth; for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

*Lor.* I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots.—Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

40

*Laun.* That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

*Lor.* Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

*Laun.* That is done, too, sir; only 'cover' is the word.

*Lor.* Will you cover, then, sir?

*Laun.* Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

*Lor.* Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner. 50

*Laun.* For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. *[Exit*

*Lor.* O dear discretion, how his words are suited! The fool hath planted in his memory  
An army of good words; and I do know  
A many fools, that stand in better place, 60  
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word  
Defy the matter.—How cheer'st thou, Jessica?  
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion:  
How dost thou like the lord Bassanio's wife?

*Jes.* Past all expressing. It is very meet  
The lord Bassanio live an upright life;  
For, having such a blessing in his lady,  
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;  
And if on earth he do not mean it, then  
In reason he should never come to heaven. 70

Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,  
And on the wager lay two earthly women,  
And Portia one, there must be something else  
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world  
Hath not her fellow.

*Lor.* Even such a husband  
Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife.

*Jes.* Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

*Lor.* I will anon; first, let us go to dinner.

*Jes.* Nay, let me praise you while I have a  
stomach.

*Lor.* No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk; so  
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things  
I shall digest it.

*Jes.* Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt*

ACT IV

SCENE I

*Venice. A court of justice*

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO,  
GRATIANO, SALARINO, SALERIO, and others*

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here?

*Ant.* Ready, so please your grace.

*Duke.* I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer  
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch  
Uncapable of pity, void and empty  
From any dram of mercy.

*Ant.* I have heard  
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify  
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,  
And that no lawful means can carry me  
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose  
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd  
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

*Duke.* Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

*Salerio.* He is ready at the door: he comes, my  
lord.

*Enter SHYLOCK*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our  
face.—

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought  
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange 20  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;  
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moiety of the principal;  
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,  
That have of late so huddled on his back,  
Enough to press a royal merchant down  
And pluck commiseration of his state 30  
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,  
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd  
To offices of tender courtesy.  
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shy.* I have possess'd your grace of what I  
purpose;

And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn  
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:  
If you deny it, let the danger light  
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.  
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have 40  
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive  
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:  
But say it is my humour: is it answer'd?  
What if my house be troubled with a rat,  
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats



To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?  
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;  
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;  
Some, when they hear the bagpipe: for affection,  
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood 50  
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:  
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,  
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;  
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;  
Why he, a wauling bagpipe; but of force  
Must yield to such inevitable shame  
As to offend, himself being offended;  
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,  
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing  
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus 60  
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

*Bass.* This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,  
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

*Shy.* I am not bound to please thee with my  
answer.

*Bass.* Do all men kill the things they do not love?

*Shy.* Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

*Bass.* Every offence is not a hate at first.

*Shy.* What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting  
thee twice?

*Ant.* I pray you, think you question with the  
Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach, 70  
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;  
You may as well use question with the wolf

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise  
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;  
You may as well do any thing most hard,  
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder?)  
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no further means; 80  
But with all brief and plain conveniency,  
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

*Bass.* For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

*Shy.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats  
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

*Duke.* How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering  
none?

*Shy.* What judgement shall I dread, doing no  
wrong?

You have among you many a purchased slave,  
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules, 90  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,  
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?  
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates  
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,  
'The slaves are ours': so do I answer you:  
The pound of flesh which I demand of him  
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it:  
If you deny me, fie upon your law! 100

There is no force in the decrees of Venice:

I stand for judgement: answer, shall I have it?

*Duke.* Upon my power I may dismiss this court,  
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,  
Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
Come here to-day.

*Salerio.* My lord, here stays without  
A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
New come from Padua.

*Duke.* Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

*Bass.* Good cheer, Antonio! What, man! courage  
yet!

110

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,  
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

*Ant.* I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit  
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:  
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,  
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk*

*Duke.* Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

*Ner.* From both, my lord: Bellario greets your  
grace. [*Presenting a letter*

*Bass.* Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly? 120

*Shy.* To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.

*Gra.* Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness  
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

*Shy.* No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

*Gra.* O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!  
And for thy life let justice be accused.  
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,  
To hold opinion with Pythagoras, 130  
That souls of animals infuse themselves  
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit  
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,  
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,  
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,  
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires  
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

*Shy.* Till thou canst rail the seal from off my  
bond,  
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall 140  
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

*Duke.* This letter from Bellario doth commend  
A young and learned doctor to our court.  
Where is he?

*Ner.* He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

*Duke.* With all my heart. Some three or four  
of you

Go give him courteous conduct to this place.  
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

*Clerk* [reads].

Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter  
I am very sick; but in the instant that your messenger came, 150

in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turn'd o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend), comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial 160 shall better publish his commendation.

*Duke.* You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:

And here, I take it, is the doctor come.—

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws*

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

*Por.* I did, my lord.

*Duke.* You are welcome: take your place.  
Are you acquainted with the difference  
That holds this present question in the court?

*Por.* I am informèd thoroughly of the cause.  
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

*Duke.* Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth. 170

*Por.* Is your name Shylock?

*Shy.* Shylock is my name.

*Por.* Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;  
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law  
Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed.—

[*To ANTONIO*] You stand within his danger, do you not?



*Duke. AND HERE, I TAKE IT, IS THE DOCTOR COME*

*Ant.* Ay, so he says.

*Por.* Do you confess the bond?

*Ant.* I do.

*Por.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shy.* On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

*Por.* The quality of mercy is not strain'd;

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven 180

Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes

The thronèd monarch better than his crown;

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

But mercy is above this sceptred sway;

It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,

It is an attribute to God himself;

190

And earthly power doth then show likest God's

When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,

Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—

That in the course of justice none of us

Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;

And that same prayer doth teach us all to render

The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much

To mitigate the justice of thy plea;

Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice

Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there. 200

*Shy.* My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,

The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

*Por.* Is he not able to discharge the money?

*Bass.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;  
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
Wrest once the law to your authority: 210  
To do a great right do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

*Por.* It must not be; there is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree establishèd:  
'Twill be recorded for a precedent;  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

*Shy.* A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel!  
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

*Por.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond. 220

*Shy.* Here 'tis, most reverend doctor; here it is.

*Por.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd  
thee.

*Shy.* An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:  
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?  
No, not for Venice.

*Por.* Why, this bond is forfeit;  
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim  
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off  
Nearest the merchant's heart.—Be merciful;  
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

*Shy.* When it is paid according to the tenour. 230  
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;



You know the law, your exposition  
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,  
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,  
Proceed to judgement. By my soul I swear  
There is no power in the tongue of man  
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

*Ant.* Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgement.

*Por.* Why, then, thus it is:  
You must prepare your bosom for his knife. 240

*Shy.* O noble judge! O excellent young man!

*Por.* For the intent and purpose of the law  
Hath full relation to the penalty  
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

*Shy.* 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!  
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

*Por.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.

*Shy.* Ay, his breast:  
So says the bond:—doth it not, noble judge?—  
Nearest his heart: those are the very words.

*Por.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh 250  
the flesh?

*Shy.* I have them ready.

*Por.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your  
charge,  
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

*Shy.* Is it so nominated in the bond?

*Por.* It is not so expressed; but what of that?  
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

*Shy.* I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

*Por.* Come, merchant, have you any thing to say?

*Ant.* But little; I'm arm'd and well prepared.—  
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well! 260  
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;  
For herein fortune shows herself more kind  
Than is her custom: it is still her use  
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,  
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow  
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance  
Of such misery doth she cut me off.  
Commend me to your honourable wife:  
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;  
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death; 270  
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge  
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.  
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,  
And he repents not that he pays your debt;  
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough  
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

*Bass.* Antonio, I am married to a wife  
Which is as dear to me as life itself;  
But life itself, my wife, and all the world  
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life; 280  
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all  
Here to this devil to deliver you.

*Por.* Your wife would give you little thanks for that,  
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gra.* I have a wife whom I protest, I love;  
I would she were in heaven, so she could  
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

*Ner.* 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;  
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

*Shy.* [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. 290  
I have a daughter;  
Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!—  
We trifle time; I pray thee, pursue sentence.

*Por.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is  
thine;  
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

*Shy.* Most rightful judge!

*Por.* And you must cut this flesh from off his  
breast;  
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

*Shy.* Most learned judge! A sentence! Come,  
prepare.

*Por.* Tarry a little; there is something else. 300  
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;  
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh':  
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;  
But, in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed  
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods  
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate  
Unto the state of Venice.

*Gra.* O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned  
judge!

*Shy.* Is that the law?

*Por.* Thyself shall see the act:  
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured 310  
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

*Gra.* O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

*Shy.* I take this offer, then;—pay the bond thrice,  
And let the Christian go.

*Bass.* Here is the money.

*Por.* Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:  
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

*Gra.* O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

*Por.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the  
flesh.

Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more 320  
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more  
Or less than a just pound,—be it but so much  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,  
Or the division of the twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn  
But in the estimation of a hair,—  
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

*Gra.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!  
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

*Por.* Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfei-  
ture. 330

*Shy.* Give me my principal, and let me go.

*Bass.* I have it ready for thee; here it is.

*Por.* He hath refused it in the open court;  
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

*Gra.* A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!—  
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

*Shy.* Shall I not have barely my principal?

*Por.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,  
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

*Shy.* Why, then the devil give him good of it! 340  
I'll stay no longer question.

*Por.* Tarry, Jew:

The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,

If it be proved against an alien

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive

Shall seize one half his goods; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state;

And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.

350

In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;

For it appears, by manifest proceeding,

That indirectly and directly too

Thou hast contrived against the very life

Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd

The danger formerly by me rehearsed.

Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

*Gra.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang  
thyself:

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,

360

Thou hast not left the value of a cord;

Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our  
spirits,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:

For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;  
The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

*Por.* Ay, for the state; not for Antonio.

*Shy.* Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:  
You take my house when you do take the prop 370  
That doth sustain my house; you take my life  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

*Por.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

*Gra.* A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's  
sake.

*Ant.* So please my lord the duke and all the court  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content; so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it,  
Upon his death, unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter; 380  
Two things provided more,—that, for this favour,  
He presently become a Christian;  
The other, that he do record a gift,  
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,  
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

*Duke.* He shall do this; or else I do recant  
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

*Por.* Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

*Shy.* I am content.

*Por.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

*Shy.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence: 390  
I am not well; send the deed after me  
And I will sign it.

*Duke.* Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gra.* In christening, thou shalt have two god-fathers;

Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,  
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit SHYLOCK*

*Duke.* Sir, I entreat you with me home to dinner.

*Por.* I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:  
I must away this night toward Padua,  
And it is meet I presently set forth.

*Duke.* I am sorry that your leisure serves you  
not.—

400

Antonio, gratify this gentleman;

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt DUKE and his Train*

*Bass.* Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend  
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted  
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,  
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,  
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

*Ant.* And stand indebted, over and above,  
In love and service to you evermore.

*Por.* He is well paid that is well satisfied:  
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,  
And therein do account myself well paid;  
My mind was never yet more mercenary.  
I pray you, know me when we meet again;  
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

410

*Bass.* Dear sir, of force I must attempt you  
further;

Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,  
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

*Por.* You press me far, and therefore I will yield.—420

[*To ANT.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for  
your sake;—

[*To BASS.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring  
from you:

Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

*Bass.* This ring, good sir,—alas, it is a trifle;  
I will not shame myself to give you this.

*Por.* I will have nothing else but only this;  
And now methinks I have a mind to it.

*Bass.* There's more depends on this than on the  
value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,  
And find it out by proclamation;  
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

430

*Por.* I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:  
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks  
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

*Bass.* Good sir, this ring was given me by my  
wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow  
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

*Por.* That 'scuse serves many men to save their  
gifts.

An if your wife be not a mad-woman  
And know how well I have deserved this ring,

440



She would not hold out enemy forever  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt* PORTIA and NERISSA]

*Ant.* My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring;  
Let his deservings and my love withal  
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

*Bass.* Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;  
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,  
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.—

[*Exit* GRATIANO]

Come, you and I will hither presently; 450  
And in the morning early will we both  
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt*]

## SCENE II

*Venice. A street*

*Enter* PORTIA and NERISSA

*Por.* Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this  
deed

And let him sign it; we'll away to-night  
And be a day before our husbands home.  
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

*Enter* GRATIANO

*Gra.* Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:  
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice  
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat  
Your company at dinner.

*Por.* That cannot be:

His ring I do accept most thankfully;  
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore, 10  
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

*Gra.* That will I do.

*Ner.* Sir, I would speak with you.—  
[*Aside to PORTIA*] I'll see if I can get my husband's  
ring,

Which I did make him swear to keep forever.

*Por.* [*Aside to NERISSA*] Thou mayst, I warrant  
We shall have old swearing  
That they did give the rings away to men;  
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.—  
[*Aloud*] Away! make haste; thou know'st where I  
will tarry.

*Ner.* Come, good sir; will you show me to this  
house? [Exeunt 20]

## ACT V

### SCENE I

*Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house*

*Enter LORENZO and JESSICA*

*Lor.* The moon shines bright: in such a night  
as this,

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,  
And they did make no noise,—in such a night  
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,  
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,  
Where Cressid lay that night.

*Jes.* In such a night

Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,  
And ran dismay'd away.

10

*Lor.* In such a night

Stood Dido with a willow in her hand  
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love  
To come again to Carthage.

*Jes.* In such a night

Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Æson.

*Lor.* In such a night

Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,

And with an unthrift love did run from Venice  
As far as Belmont.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
And ne'er a true one.

*Lor.* In such a night 20  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

*Jes.* I would out-night you, did no body come:  
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

*Enter STEPHANO*

*Lor.* Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

*Steph.* A friend.

*Lor.* A friend! what friend? your name, I pray  
you, friend?

*Steph.* Stephano is my name; and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont; she doth stray about 30  
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays  
For happy wedlock hours.

*Lor.* Who comes with her?

*Steph.* None but a holy hermit and her maid.  
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

*Lor.* He is not, nor we have not heard from  
him.—

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,  
And ceremoniously let us prepare  
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter LAUNCELOT*

*Laun.* Sola, sola: wo, ha, ho, sola, sola!

*Lor.* Who calls?

40

*Laun.* Sola! Did you see master Lorenzo?

Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

*Lor.* Leave hollaing, man; here.

*Laun.* Sola! Where? where?

*Lor.* Here.

*Laun.* Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news; my master will be here ere morning. *[Exit*

*Lor.* Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in?—

50

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,

Within the house, your mistress is at hand:

And bring your music forth into the air.—

*[Exit STEPHANO*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music

Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st 60

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.—

*Enter Musicians*

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn;  
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear  
And draw her home with music. [Music

*Jes.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lor.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive: 70  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,  
Which is the hot condition of their blood;  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and  
floods; 80

Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA at a distance*

*Por.* That light we see is burning in my hall.

How far that little candle throws his beams!      90  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ner.* When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

*Por.* So doth the greater glory dim the less:  
A substitute shines brightly as a king  
Until a king be by; and then his state  
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

*Ner.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Por.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect;  
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.      100

*Ner.* Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

*Por.* The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,  
When neither is attended; and I think  
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,  
When every goose is cackling, would be thought  
No better a musician than the wren.

How many things by season season'd are  
To their right praise and true perfection!—

Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion

And would not be awaked!      [*Music ceases*

*Lor.*      That is the voice,      110  
Or am I much deceived, of Portia.

*Por.* He knows me, as the blind man knows the  
cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.

*Lor.*      Dear lady, welcome home.

*Por.* We have been praying for our husbands'  
welfare,

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return'd?

*Lor.* Madam, they are not yet;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.

*Por.* Go in, Nerissa;  
Give order to my servants that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence;— 120  
Nor you, Lorenzo;—Jessica, nor you.

[*A tucket sounds*

*Lor.* Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:  
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

*Por.* This night methinks is but the daylight  
sick;  
It looks a little paler; 'tis a day,  
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and  
their Followers*

*Bass.* We should hold day with the Antipodes,  
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

*Por.* Let me give light, but let me not be light;  
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, 130  
And never be Bassanio so for me;  
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.

*Bass.* I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my  
friend.  
This is the man, this is Antonio,  
To whom I am so infinitely bound.



*Por.* You should in all sense be much bound to him,

For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

*Ant.* No more than I am well acquitted of.

*Por.* Sir, you are very welcome to our house:  
It must appear in other ways than words, 140  
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

[*GRATIANO and NERISSA talk apart*

*Gra.* By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;  
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk

*Por.* A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?

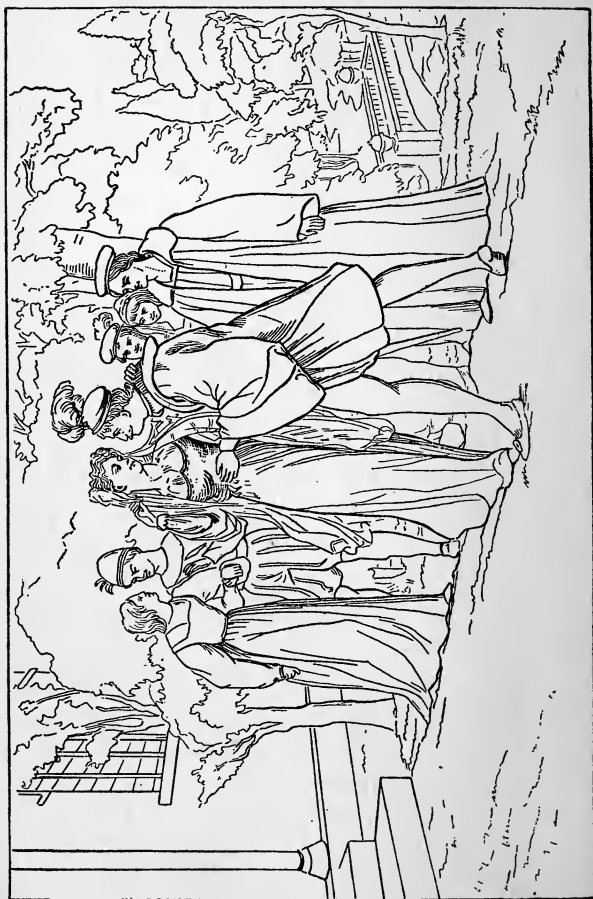
*Gra.* About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring  
That she did give me; whose posy was  
For all the world like cutler's poetry  
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

*Ner.* What talk you of the posy, or the value?  
You swore to me, when I did give it you, 150  
That you would wear it till your hour of death;  
And that it should lie with you in your grave:  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,  
You should have been respective and have kept it.  
Gave it a judge's clerk!—but well I know  
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

*Gra.* He will, an if he live to be a man.

*Ner.* Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

*Gra.* Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy; a little scrubbèd boy, 160  
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;  
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee;  
I could not for my heart deny it him.



*Portia.* YOU ARE WELCOME HOME, MY LORD

*Por.* You were to blame, I must be plain with you,  
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;  
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger  
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.  
I gave my love a ring and made him swear  
Never to part with it; and here he stands;  
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it 170  
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth  
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,  
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;  
An't were to me, I should be mad at it.

*Bass.* [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left  
hand off

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

*Gra.* My lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begg'd it and, indeed,  
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk  
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine: 180  
And neither man nor master would take aught  
But the two rings.

*Por.* What ring gave you, my lord?  
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

*Bass.* If I could add a lie unto a fault,  
I would deny it; but you see my finger  
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.

*Por.* Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
By heaven, I will never be your wife  
Until I see the ring.

*Ner.* Nor I yours,  
Till I again see mine.

*Bass.*

Sweet Portia,

190

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,  
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,  
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,  
And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
When naught would be accepted but the ring,  
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

*Por.* If you had known the virtue of the ring,

Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,

Or your own honour to contain the ring,

You would not then have parted with the ring.

200

What man is there so much unreasonable,

If you had pleased to have defended it

With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty

To urge the thing held as a ceremony?

Nerissa teaches me what to believe;

I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

*Bass.* No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,

No woman had it, but a civil doctor,

Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,

And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,

210

And suffer'd him to go displeased away;

Even he that did uphold the very life

Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet  
lady?

I was enforced to send it after him;

I was beset with shame and courtesy;

My honour would not let ingratitude

So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;

For, by these blessed candles of the night,

Had you been there, I think, you would have begg'd  
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor. 220

*Por.* Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:  
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,  
And that which you did swear to keep for me,  
I will become as liberal as you:  
I'll not deny him any thing I have.

*Ner.* And I his clerk; therefore be well advised,  
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

*Gra.* Well, do you so: let not me take him then;  
For, if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

*Ant.* I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels. 230

*Por.* Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

*Bass.* Portia, forgive me this enforcèd wrong;  
And, in the hearing of these many friends,  
I swear to thee, even by thy own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself,—

*Por.* Mark you but that!  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself:  
In each eye one:—swear by your double self,  
And there's an oath of credit.

*Bass.* Nay, but hear me.  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear  
I never more will break an oath with thee. 240

*Ant.* I once did lend my body for his wealth;  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,  
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

*Por.* Then you shall be his surety. Give him this;  
And bid him keep it better than the other.

*Ant.* Here, lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

*Bass.* By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

*Por.* You are all amazed:

250

Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;  
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:  
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor;  
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here  
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you  
And even but now return'd; I have not yet  
Enter'd my house.—Antonio, you are welcome:  
And I have better news in store for you  
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;  
There you shall find three of your argosies  
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:  
You shall not know by what strange accident  
I chanced on this letter.

260

*Ant.* I am dumb.

*Bass.* Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?

*Ant.* Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;

For here I read for certain that my ships  
Are safely come to road.

*Por.* How now, Lorenzo!

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

*Ner.* Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.—

There do I give to you and Jessica,  
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,  
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.

270

*Lor.* Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way  
Of starvèd people.

*Por.* It is almost morning,  
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied  
Of these events at full. Let us go in;  
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,  
And we will answer all things faithfully.

*Gra.* Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing  
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

280

*[Exeunt*





## NOTES

The following contractions are used in the notes: Cf.=confer (compare); Cogs.=cognates; Gr.=Greek; Lat.=Latin; N. E.=Northern English; N. Fr.=Norman French; O. E.=Old English (or Anglo-Saxon); Abbott=Dr. Abbott's *Shakespearean Grammar*; Cl. P. S.=Clarendon Press Series; and Co. S.=Collins's Series.

### ACT I

#### SCENE I

"In this first scene, we view Antonio 'rich, liberal, surrounded with friends; yet he is unhappy. . . . He will not acknowledge the foreboding of evil which comes across his mind.'—KNIGHT. We are shown the causes of the drama's action; Bassanio's courtship of Portia, and Antonio's generous love for his friend."

**Page 37. 1. Sooth. Truth.** We have the compounds *forsooth* (used both seriously and ironically), *soothfast*, and *soothsayer* (prophet); and Shakespeare has the phrases, *in good sooth* and *in very sooth*. In *Rich rd II* (III, iii), we find *words of sooth* for *kindly words of assent*.—**Sad.** Coleridge points out that this speech of Antonio's gives the key-note of the play; the coming disaster casts a shadow over the prosperous merchant.

**4. Stuff.** In the old sense of *material*. So *Julius Cæsar* (III, ii, 95): "Ambition should be made of sterner stuff"; and *The Tempest* (IV, i, 137): "We are such stuff as dreams are made on."

**6. Want-wit.** Idiot; *wit* being used in the older meaning of *ability* or *sense*. *Wan* (which is a cognate of *want* and *wane*) was in O. E. a common prefix; thus we had *wanhope* for *despair*; *wantrust* (*mistrust*), etc.

**9. Argosies.** *Argo* was the name of the ship which carried Jason to Colchis, and hence became a favorite name for vessels. *Argis* was the Low Latin for a large merchant vessel.

**10. Signiors.** The Italian way of spelling the Latin *senior*, an elder. The *g* comes in through the combination of *n* and *i*, as in *stranger*, from *extraneus*.—**Burghers.** Townsmen (freemen of a burgh), of less high rank than the signiors.

11. **Pageants.** This word originally meant the movable platform on which mystery plays were performed. "In calling argosies *pageants*, Shakespeare alludes to the enormous machines in the shapes of castles, dragons, giants, etc., that were drawn about the streets in the ancient shows or pageants."

12. **Overpeer.** *Pore* is a cognate of *peer*.

15. **Venture.** Risk, or what is risked. *Venture* was, in Shakespeare's time, the technical term for a cargo; so the merchants of Bristol called themselves "Merchant Adventurers."

**Forth.** *Out.* See also line 143 of this scene; and Shylock's (II, v, 11): "I am bid forth to supper." So *Othello* (V, i): "Forth! my sword."

17. **Still.** Constantly. So *Othello* (I, iii, 147):—

But still the house affairs would draw her thence.

Shakespeare also uses *still* as an adjective: *Titus Andronicus* (III, ii): "And by still practice learn to know the meaning."

**Page 38.** 19. **Peering in.** We should now say *poring over*. —**Roads.** Where ships *ride*.

21. **Out of doubt.** Modifies *make*.

25. **Sandy.** Cf. *Henry VI, Part I* (IV, ii, 35):—

For ere the glass . . .

Finish the process [the going out] of his sandy hour.

**Hour-glass.** In Shakespeare's time an hour-glass was commonly found in churches, fixed near the pulpit. (Cl. P. S.)

27. **Andrew.** A favorite name for large merchant ships, probably from the great Genoese admiral, Andrea Doria, who died in 1560.

28. **Vailing.** Lowering. Spenser has *avale*, which is said to come from Lat. *ad vallem* (to the valley), as *amount* is from *ad montem* (to the height).

31. **Straight.** At once This is the most usual meaning of the word in Shakespeare.

33. **Stream.** Current. Cf. Gulf Stream.

35. **Worth this.** Some expressive gesture must be supposed.

42. **Bottom.** Vessel.

**Page 39.** 50. **Janus** (and **Jana**). Old forms of *Dianus* and *Diana*, the sun and the moon. Janus opened the year; and hence the first month was called after him. He was the porter of heaven, and hence was called *Patulcus* (from *pateo*, I open) and *Clusius* (from *claudio*, I shut). He was the guardian deity of gates, and, as a gate looks two ways, he is represented with two heads.

55. **In way.** Cf. *Julius Cæsar* (III, i, 217): "In number of

our friends," and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (I, i): "In absence of thy friend." Other omissions of *the* are found in the phrases *a door, at palace, at height, in pail*, etc.

56. **Nestor.** King of Pylos, and the adviser of the Greeks in the Trojan war. Nestor attained a great age and was famous for his wisdom. (Co. S.)

58. **Fare.** From O. E. *faran*, to go. Cogs.: Far, fare (payment), thoroughfare, fieldfare, ferry, ford, welfare, farewell.

61. **Prevented.** Anticipated. So, in the Prayer-book: "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings."

67. **Strange.** It is the opposite of *familiar*. So *Twelfth Night* (V, i, 208): "You throw a strange regard upon me", and *Comedy of Errors* (II, ii): "As strange unto your town as to your talk."

Page 40. 74. **Respect upon.** Carefulness about. Shakespeare generally uses *of* after respect. Cf. *Macbeth* (III, i, 17): "Let your highness command upon me."

79. **Fool.** The *Fool* was a stock character in all the old comedies, and his function was to show the comic side of all that was happening on the stage.

84. **Grandsire.** *Sire* and *sir* are contracted forms of *senior*.

85. **Jaundice** (from Fr. *jaune*) was formerly called the *yellowes*.

89. **Mantle.** Used by Shakespeare both transitively and intransitively. Cf. *The Tempest* (V, i, 67): "The ignorant fumes that mantle their clearer reason." In the present passage the verb is intransitive.

90. **Do.** The nominative *who* must be supplied out of *whose*.—**Stillness.** Silence. (Cf. V, i, 56.)—**Entertain.** Maintain.

91. **Opinion.** Reputation. Cf. *Henry IV, Part I* (III, ii, 42): "Opinion, that did help me to the crown"; and *Othello* (I, iii, 225): "Opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects."

92. **Conceit.** The most usual meaning of this word in Shakespeare is *conception* or *idea*; the next is *mental power*; and the least usual is *fanciful thought*—a meaning which comes nearest to our modern one, which, however, is never employed by Shakespeare.

94. **Ope.** Short form for *open*.

97-99. **Who I'm very sure . . . fools.** This is a difficult passage. It is said to be an allusion to *Matt. v. 22*; and that the meaning is that these silent conceited persons would, if they spoke, provoke their hearers to call them fools, and that these hearers would thus incur the condemnation mentioned in the text. A silly speech brings the hearer, in Gratiano's view, into danger of perdition, by tempting him to say to his brother, "Thou fool!" In Shakespeare a number of thoughts jostle each other, become mixed, and lose their identity, so that even Shakespeare himself could not have unravelled and individualized them.

**Page 41. 102. Gudgeon.** A fish easily caught. (Co. S.)

**108. Moe.** Shakespeare has the three forms, *mo*, *moe*, and *more*.

**110. Gear.** Stuff; used by Shakespeare also in the sense of *business*.

**123. Disabled.** Impaired. Used by Shakespeare also in the sense of *undervalue*, in this play, and in *As You Like It*, (IV, i): "Disable all the benefits of your own country."

**124. Something.** Somewhat.—**Swelling port.** So, in III, ii, 277: "The magnificoes of greatest port."

**Page 42. 125. Continuance.** *Of* is required. So, in IV, i, 384: "All he dies possessed."

**126. Make moan to.** Complain about. The O. E. infinitive ended in *an*; and *to* was used only with the gerund *to lovene*=*ad amandum*, and to express purpose, as "He went to find it" (also in some Eng. "*for to find it*"). But in Shakespeare we find *to* employed with many senses. Thus, in IV, i, 431: "I will not shame myself to give you [=by giving you] this"; and *Richard III* (II, ii): "Ah, who shall hinder me to wail [=from wailing] and weep?" and *Romeo and Juliet* (V, iii):—

What mean these masterless and gory swords  
To lie [=by lying] discolored by this place of peace?

**130. Gaged.** For *engaged*, meaning *pledged*.

**132. Warranty.** Eng. form of *guarantee*. The Norman French, unable to pronounce the *w*, employed a *gu*; and the English sometimes substituted a *w* for a *g* or *gu*. Cf. war, *guerre*; wile, guile; wise, guise; warden, guardian; wardrobe, *garderobe*; William, *Guillaume*; and others.

**136. Still.** Constantly. It would be a very doubtful compliment if Antonio meant *up to this time*. Cf. note on I. i. 17.

**141. His.** For *its*. The word *its* did not come into general use till the end of the seventeenth century. Shakespeare died in 1616. Milton, who hardly ever uses *its*, died in 1674. *Its* is an improperly formed genitive, just as *illudius* would be. The old third personal pronoun was *he*, *heo*, *hit*, where the *t* is the sign of the neuter; and the genitive was *his*, *hire*, *his*.

**142. Advised.** Careful, considerate. Cf. *Henry V* (I, ii, 176):—

While that the armed hand doth fight abroad,  
The advised head defends itself at home.

**144. Childhood proof.** Childish test.

**146. Wilful.** Reckless. The whole sentence is illogical; but

it is in the usual compressed and conversational manner of Shakespeare.

148. **Self.** Same. Shakespeare frequently uses the word in this sense. Cf. *King Lear* (I, i, 53): "I am made of that self metal that my sister is."

Page 43. 154. **Circumstance.** Beating round about the bush.

156. **Uttermost.** Means. An adjective is frequently used for a noun by Shakespeare, and in peculiar ways. He uses an adjective to designate a *single person*. In *The Winter's Tale* (I, ii, 472): "His that did betray the Best" (=Christ); *Timon of Athens* (I. i): "'Tis not enough to help the feeble up, but to support him after"; and in Sonnet lxxviii, 7: "And added feathers to the learned's wing." Again, Shakespeare has an adjective for an abstract noun. In *Venus and Adonis*: "A sudden pale usurps her cheek."

160. **Prest.** Ready.

161. **Richly left.** With a large inheritance.

163. **Sometimes.** Probably for *sometime*=at one time.

164. **Speechless.** In his eighth Sonnet, Shakespeare calls a song without words "a speechless song."

171. **Colchos.** More correctly *Colchis*, a country at the east end of the Black Sea, ruled over by King Æetes, who possessed the Golden Fleece, guarded by a watchful dragon. Jason was sent by his uncle Pelias to fetch the Fleece; and he succeeded by the help of Medea, the daughter of the king.

172. **Quest.** From Lat. *quæro*, *quæsitum*, *quærere*, to seek. Cogs.: Inquire, require, inquest, request.

174. **Rival.** From Lat. *rivus*, a stream; persons living on the banks of a brook were supposed to have a standing difference with each other about water-rights.

175. **Presages.** Supply *which*. The omission of the relative is another mark of Shakespeare's conversational style. Cf. *Measure for Measure* (II, ii, 34): "I have a brother is condemned to die"; and *Richard II* (II, ii, 128): "The hate of those (who) love not the king." (See Abbott, sect. 244.)—

**Thrift.** Success. From *thrive*. Cf. Drive, drift; draw, draft; shove, shift.

178. **Commodity.** Property on which I can raise a loan.

181. **Rack'd.** Stretched.

183. **Presently.** Instantly.

Page 44. 185. **Of my trust.** On my credit as a merchant, or on personal grounds as a friend. So Shakespeare has *of force*, *of no right* (we now say *of right*); and see *Hamlet* (II, i, 61).

## SCENE II

"This scene brings before us the plot of the three caskets. We learn that, by her father's will, the beautiful Portia is bound to accept that man as husband who shall choose the right casket. At the end of the scene it is apparent that Bassanio's chances of winning the lady were excellent, if his fortune depended only on the wishes of the mistress and her maid. The lighter side of Portia's character is charmingly depicted in this scene."

1. **Troth.** An asseveration. The word is a form of *truth*. *Troth* seems to be truth of character, faithfulness; *truth*, truth of statement. To *betroth*, is to pledge one's *troth*.

3. **Sweet.** Gentle.

6. **Surfeit.** From Fr. *surfaire*, to overdo.—**Starve** in O. E. meant *to die*. Down to Chaucer's time (fourteenth century) it retains that meaning. The noun *starvation* is a hybrid, first uttered by a Mr. Dundas, a Scotchman and Chancellor of the Exchequer in the middle of the eighteenth century.

8. **Mean.** From Lat. *medium*, through Low Lat. *medianum*, which gave the Fr. *moyen*.

15. **Easier.** Shakespeare frequently uses adjectives as adverbs. Thus *Macbeth* (II, iii, 124): "Which the false man does *easy*"; *Antony and Cleopatra* (II, ii): "'Tis *noble spoken*."

16. **Twenty=twain-tig.** *Tig* is the Danish for *ten*.

21. **Reasoning.** Talk. Cf. *Henry V* (III, vii, 38): "'Tis a subject for a sovereign to reason on"; *Cymbeline* (IV, ii, 13): "I am not very sick, since I can reason of it"; and II, viii, 27 of this play: "I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday."

**Page 45.** 24. **Will.** Shakespeare liked a bad pun. So in *Julius Cæsar* (I, ii, 158) we have a pun on *Rome* (pronounced *Room*):—

Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,  
When her wide walls encircle but one man.

26. **Nor . . . none.** The O. E. custom was to double or even quadruple the negative, for the sake of intensity or emphasis. Thus Chaucer:—

He *never* yit *no* vilanye *ne* saide  
In al his lyf unto *ne* maner wight.

The Latin use of making the one negative destroy the other appears in the seventeenth century.

27. **Holy.** From *heal*. Cogs.; Health; (w)hole, (w)hole-

some; hail. The *w* in *whole* is an error, as it is in the sound of *one*.

29. **Devised.** Appointed by will. From Fr. *diviser*; and it therefore meant originally *to divide*.

32. **One.** A modern writer would say *by one*.

35. **Over-name them.** In modern English, *name them over*.

37. **Level.** Aim. So *Richard III* (IV, iv, 207): "Level not to hit their lives."

40. **Appropriation.** Acquired excellence.

43. **County.** Count. A *palatinate* was a piece of land belonging to the *palace* (Lat. *palatium*), as a personal appendage of the king or prince; and the count of it was the *County Palatine*.

47. **The weeping philosopher.** Heraclitus, in opposition to the laughing philosopher, Democritus.

48. **Had rather.** *Had* is the O. E. subjunctive, and corresponds to the German *hatte*. *Rather* is comparative of *rathe*, early. Cf. Milton's *Lycidas*: "And the *rathe* primrose that neglected dies."

Page 46. 59. **Throstle.** A form of the word *thrush*.—**Capering.** From Lat. *caper*, a goat.

66. **Say . . . to.** Portia intentionally misunderstands Nerissa.

68. **Come into the court.** Bear me witness.

70. **The English.** This is the old usage, still preserved in Scotland. So Frenchmen say *Le latin*; *le grec*, etc.

72. **Suited.** Dressed. A *suit* of clothes was so called because each thing agreed with or 'followed' another.—**Doublet.** Coat or jacket.

73. **Round hose** were those puffed out at the top.—**Bonnet** was in Shakespeare's time, as it still is in France and Scotland, the name for a man's headdress. Cf. *Richard II* (I, iv, 31): "Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench."

80. **The Frenchman became his surety.** This is a sly hit at the long-standing alliance between the French and the Scotch.

81. **Sealed under.** Signed (with his name and seal) the supposed bond signed by the Scotchman, but *under* the Scotchman's name.

Page 47. 86. **Drunk.** Drunkenness was the usual charge against the Germans, or, as they were called in Shakespeare's time, Dutchmen.

94. **Rhenish.** Now called *hock*.—**Contrary.** Wrong.

104. **Imposition.** Conditions imposed.

105. **Sibylla** was not a proper name. There were several Sibyllæ or prophetesses—ten, say some—from the Babylonians down to the Tiburtine.

**Page 48.** 128. **Condition.** Disposition.

130. **Shrive.** Hear the confession of, and absolve.

### SCENE III

"This scene is very important. By the insight we get into the character of Shylock, and by the intimations of the treatment which he has received at Antonio's hands, we are prepared to understand the Jew's frightful revenge. Shylock hates Antonio as a man, as a merchant who lends money without interest, and as a Christian, but he conceals this hatred under a friendly mask. When he has the power, he will repay his enemy tenfold for his intolerance, the sole blot on the merchant's character."

1. **Ducats.** From Fr. *ducat*, a coin issued by a sovereign duke.

**Page 49.** 7. **Stead.** Help. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (II, i): "So it steads you, I will write."—**Pleasure.** Frequently used by Shakespeare as a verb.

12. **Good.** Sound, solvent, in much the same sense as the modern phrase, "as good as my word." In *Cymbeline* (V, iv) Shakespeare has "as good as promise."

17. **In supposition.** In an unrealized and therefore doubtful form, as they may never come to port.

20. **Rialto.** The Exchange of Venice.

21. **Squandered.** Scattered. Cf. *As You Like It* (II, vii, 58): "The squandering glances of the fool."

33. **The habitation which,** etc. See *Matt.* viii. 32.

**Page 50.** 40. **Fawning publican.** The publicani were the men who bought the right of collecting the taxes and tributes due to the Roman government in Syria and other Roman provinces; they became very rich, and certainly did not need to fawn. But the feeling in Shakespeare's mind probably was that the publicans were the persons most hated by the Jews; and thus the term would naturally occur to a Jew in a passion.

44. **Usance.** Interest, payment for the use of money. The word occurs also in line 103.

45. **Catch . . . upon the hip** and throw him—a phrase taken from the practice of wrestling.

46. **Ancient.** Of long standing. This is the most frequent meaning in Shakespeare.

50. **Interest.** Everything relating to money-lending was looked upon in the Middle Ages as disgraceful; and words like *usury* and *interest* carried with them a sense of reprobation. *Usury* still has that sense, but *interest* has lost it.



53. **Near.** Coming as close as mere memory can bring me, without consulting my books.

56. **Tubal.** Money-lenders, since the earliest ages, have always hunted in couples. Dickens, in *David Copperfield*, typifies the class in Messrs. Spenlow & Jorkins.

Page 51. 62. **Ripe wants.** Wants come to maturity, and requiring immediate satisfaction. Cf. "My thoughts are ripe in mischief" (*Twelfth Night*, V, i, 125); also "ripe revenue."

63. **Possess'd.** Fully informed.

68. **Methought**=it thought me, it seemed to me. There were two verbs, the intransitive *thincan*, to seem, and the transitive *thencan*, to think.

77. **Were compromised.** Had made an agreement. (Co. S.)

78. **Eanlings.** Newborn lambs.—**Pied.** Spotted.

Page 52. 100. **Beholding.** Beholden. *Beholding* occurs nineteen times in Shakespeare; *beholden* never once. Dr. Abbott thinks "Shakespeare fancied that *ing* was equivalent to *en*, the old affix of the past participle."

105. **Badge.** Said to be a dialectic form of *patch*.

107. **Gaberdine.** Ital. *gavardina*, a long coarse smock-frock. The word occurs again *The Tempest* (II, ii, 40).

Page 53. 112. **Void.** An adjective used as a verb. (See Abbott, sect. 290.)

113. **Foot.** A noun used as a verb. As with the adjective, the same set of causes produced this grammatical usage. Shakespeare has "*barns* a harvest"; "Such stuff as madmen *tongue*, and *brain* not" (chatter about but cannot think) (*Cymbeline*, V, iv, 146); to disaster, to knee, to lesson, to malice, to wage, etc.—**Spurn.** To strike with the *spur* or heel. *To spur* is to incite to pursuit. The idea of contempt in *spurn* is therefore secondary.

129. **A breed of.** Interest for.

131. **Who, if he break.** The *who* is a nominative without a verb. This is called by grammarians the "hanging nominative."

135. **Doit** is the English way of writing the German *Deut* (pronounced *doit*), a small coin.

Page 54. 139. **Notary.** A law-officer who *notes*, or marks, or certifies deeds and other law writings.

140. **Single.** With your own name only; without any other names as additional sureties.

143. **Condition.** Agreement.—**Forfeit.** From Low Latin *forisfacere*, to put out of doors, or outlaw; and hence, applied to property, to lose.

144. **Nominated for.** Specified as.—**Equal.** Exact. Cf. *Measure for Measure* (II, iv, 68): "Were equal poise of sin and charity."

150. **Dwell.** Continue. Cf. *Henry VIII* (III, ii, 132): "He should still dwell in his musings."

167. **Muttons, beefs.** Here Shylock uses the N. Fr. words instead of the English *sheep* and *oxen*. Perhaps Shakespeare employed these words to give a quaint and foreign flavor to Shylock's talk.

163. **Extend.** Offer.

**Page 56.** 165. **For my love.** For my love's sake.

170. **Fearful.** In the sense of *to be feared for*. Dr. Abbott (sect. 3) notes: dreadful=awe-struck; terrible=frightened; a careless trifle (=not worth caring for), and others.

174. **Villain's mind.** The *meaning* (*meaning* is a cognate of *mind*) which a villain puts into the seemingly very fair terms.

## ACT II

### SCENE I

"This scene explains the story of the caskets more fully. We are told that he who chooses wrongly is 'never to speak to lady afterward in way of marriage,' a provision well calculated to keep down the number of suitors."

**Page 57.** 1. **Mislike.** A word found three times in Shakespeare.

9. **Fear'd.** Terrified. Shakespeare frequently uses an intransitive verb as a transitive. Cf. *Henry VI, Part II* (III, ii, 100): "Thy flinty heart might perish Margaret."

12. **Thoughts.** Affection.

14. **Nice.** Fastidious.

16. **Bars.** Excludes, debars.

17. **Scanted.** Straitened or limited. Cf. *Henry V* (II, iv, 149): "Spoil his coat with scanting a little cloth." And Shakespeare has such phrases as "to scant excess," "to scant our former leaving," "to scant obedience" (*King Lear*, I, i, 261), and "to scant her duty."

19. **His . . . who.** The antecedent to *who* must be found in *his*. This is very common in Shakespeare.

20. **Stood**=would have stood.

**Page 58.** 25. **Sophy.** The "common name for the emperor of Persia."

26. **Fields of.** Battles from.—**Solyman.** The Eastern form of *Solomon*. Modern Ger. and Eng. forms are *Seligman* and *Silliman*. Solyman the Magnificent fought against the Persians in 1535.

31. **While.** The O. E. *hwile* meant a space of time. It is used as a noun, a conjunctive adverb, and as a verb.

32. **Lichas.** The page who brought to Hercules the poisoned shirt from Dejanira.

35. **Alcides.** The son of Alceus=Hercules. *Ides* was the Greek patronymic—like *son*, *Mac* (Gaelic), *vitch* (in Russian), and *ski* (in Polish).

42. **Advised.** Careful and do not attempt it.

## SCENE II

"This amusing scene shows us another view of Shylock's character. Launcelot's conscience cannot persuade him to remain longer with such a master. Later in the scene we are prepared for Gratiano's courtship of Nerissa, and get our first knowledge of the masque which serves in a future scene for the escape of Jessica."

**Page 59. 9. Heels.** The part for the whole. Cf. *As You Like It* (III, ii, 280): "Wit was made of Atalanta's heels."

10. **Via!** Italian (from Lat. *via*, a way) for *Be off!*

23. **The mark.** Perhaps the mark of the cross.

**Page 60. 35. Sand-blind.** Purbblind. Perhaps, says Mr. Wright, a corruption of O. E. *sam* (=Lat. *semi*), half.

36. **Confusions.** Launcelot uses learned and Latinized terms, and constantly makes mistakes in them; thus *confusions* is for *conclusions*.

42. **Marry.** An ordinary pronunciation of *Mary*=by Our Lady.

43. **Indirectly.** He means *directly* or *straight*.

44. **Sonties.** Corrupted from *saints* or *sanctities*. (Cl. P. S.)

48. **Raise the waters.** Raise a storm or commotion.

53. **A'.** For *he*. (See Abbott, sect. 402.)

**Page 61. 56. Ergo.** Lat. *therefore*. Launcelot has picked up a few Latin words, probably from attending his master at the court during lawsuits.

58. **An't**=*an it*, that is, *if it*.

60. **Father.** The ordinary mode of address from a young man to an elder, and not intended by Launcelot to enable his father to recognize him.

68. **Hovel-post.** A post to support a hovel or shed. (Co. S.)—

81. **Stand up.** Launcelot had been kneeling; and, according to the tradition of the stage from Shakespeare's own time, had presented the back of his head with its long hair to his father, who mistook it for a beard, while Launcelot has none.

**Page 62. 93. Fill-horse.** For *thill-horse* = *shaft-horse*. *F* and *th* are frequently interchanged both by individuals and by nations; the Russians write *Feodore* for *Theodore*.

**102. Set up my rest.** A technical expression taken from an old game at cards = I am satisfied with my hand, I have made up my mind.

**105. Finger . . . with my ribs.** Use my ribs for counting my fingers.

**Page 63. 115. Anon** = an one = at once. *An* is an old form of *on*.

**119. Gramercy.** Corrupted from Fr. *grand merci*, much thanks.

**124. Infection.** For *affection* or *desire*.

**130. Cater-cousins.** This word occurs only here in Shakespeare, and there is nothing but conjecture as to the derivation. It may mean "allied not only by blood, but by accidentally meeting at the same table, when they are 'catered for' together."

**133. Frutify.** For *certify*.

**137. Impertinent.** For *pertinent* = relating to.

**Page 64. 143. Defect.** For *effect*.

**146. Preferr'd.** Recommended for preferment.

**155. Guarded.** Braided or trimmed.

**158. Table.** The palm of the hand. The science of chiromancy (divining by the hand) was practised in Shakespeare's time, and is now by gypsies.

**Page 65. 170. Bestow'd.** Arranged; also used by Shakespeare in its oldest sense of *stow away*.

**177. Suit.** A request to make.

**185. Liberal.** Free, even to taking "liberties." Shakespeare has also such phrases as "a liberal villain."—**Pain.** Shakespeare has both *pain* and *pains*.

**187. Skipping.** Thoughtless. Cf. *Macbeth* (I, ii, 30): "Compelled these skipping kerns to trust their heels." Shakespeare uses *skipper* for a flighty person (*Taming of the Shrew*, II, 341).

**190. Habit.** Demeanor.

**Page 66. 191. With respect.** Thoughtfully, and to the point.

**195. Civility.** Used in the objective sense for *refinement*.

**196. Sad ostent.** Grave demeanor.

### SCENE III

"As Homer makes us understand the greatness of Helen's beauty by showing its effect on the elders of Troy, so Shakespeare exhibits the charm of Jessica in the words and tears of the clown."

**Page 67. 10. Exhibit.** Launcelot meant *inhibit* (stop).

**16. Heinous.** From Fr. *haine* (*hatred*). Shakespeare even uses it of animals—"that heinous tiger" (*Titus Andronicus*, V, iii).

## SCENE IV

"The plan of the masque, including Jessica's elopement, is herein further discussed."

**2. Disguise us.** Such reflexive verbs are not unusual in Shakespeare. He has: repent me, repose you, retire himself, fear me, and even appear itself, where *appear* is transitive.

**5. Spoke us of.** Bespoke.

**6. Quaintly.** Fully, thoroughly *well*, and elegantly.

**Page 68. 10. Break up**=*op*=*open*.

**11. Signify.** Tell you.

**23. Provided of.** Shakespeare has also: supplied of, satisfied of, mixed of, puffed of, etc.

**Page 69. 37. Faithless.** Who does not hold the (Christian) faith.

**39. Shall be**=is to be.

## SCENE V

"This scene is taken up with the escape of Jessica. Shylock goes to feast with Bassanio, and tells Jessica to keep the house fast shut. Launcelot delivers a message of contrary effect from Lorenzo and, as elsewhere, Jessica obeys her love at her father's expense."

**3. What.** An interjection used in calling a person.

**11. Bid forth.** Asked out.

**Page 70. 17. A-brewing.** *A* is the broken-down form of the preposition *an*, now *on*. *Brewing* is the verbal noun, which formerly ended in *ung*.

**20. Reproach.** For *approach*.

**25. Black-Monday** was Easter Monday, April 14, 1360, when Edward III was lying with his army before Paris, and when "a storm so bitter cold" broke on them that many men died on horseback. The tradition remained; as the tradition of Black Friday in 1866, when Gurneys' Bank broke and there was a money panic in the city of London, still remains.

**30. Wry-neck'd.** Wry, from O. E. *wriþan*, to twist. Cogs.:

Writhe, wreathe, wriggle; awry. It is the player who is *wry-necked*, because he has to turn his neck round.

33. **Varnish'd faces.** The maskers painted their faces by way of disguise. (Cl. P. S.)

42. **Worth a Jewess' eye, or a Jew's eye.** This was a proverbial expression, and dates from the times when teeth or eyes were extracted, ears sliced, and other tortures practised on Jews to make them pay large ransoms.

**Page 71.** 43. **Hagar's offspring.** The Gentiles.

45. **Patch.** The professional jester wore a patched or motley coat. *Patch* was a common nickname for a fool.

54. **Stale.** From *stall*; what has long been exposed on a *stall*.

## SCENE VI

1. **Pent-house.** From the Fr. *appentis* (a lean-to), from Lat. *ad*, to, and *pendere*, to hang. *Appendix* is the same word in another form. When a word is transferred bodily to another language, the tendency is for it to take the form of some other word in the language. Thus *buffetier* becomes beefeater; *Bocage-walk*, Bird-cage-walk; *Château vert*, Shotover; *Whittington and his acate* (purchasing), Whittington and his cat; *quelque chose*, kickshaws; *etiquette*, the ticket; and others.

5. **Venus' pigeons.** Venus was said to be drawn in a chariot by doves.

7. **Obliged.** Bound by contract, under obligation.

**Page 72.** 9. **Sits down.** Supply *with*.

10. **Untread.** Tread in the opposite direction, retrace.

14. **Yunker.** Shakespeare only once employs the word *youngster*.

15. **Scarfed.** Decked with streamers, long pennants, and flags.

18. **Over-weather'd.** Weather-beaten to excess.

21. **Abode.** Delay, tarrying.

30. **Who.** For *whom*. Dr. Abbott (sect. 274) gives several similar instances.

**Page 73.** 35. **Exchange,** of my ordinary dress for that of a page.

42. **Too too light.** Of this repetition of the *too* there are six examples in Shakespeare. The best known one is in *Hamlet* (I, ii, 129): "O that this too too solid flesh would melt!"—**Light** is here used in a double sense.

45. **Garnish.** Dress. From Fr. *garner* (to furnish), which is really the French form of the English (Teutonic) *warn*.

47. **Close.** Secret.

51. **By my hood.** Dr. Schmidt, the author of the *Shakespeare Lexicon*, thinks it means *by my mask*.

52. **Beshrew me.** Indeed. *Shrew* is connected with *shrewd*. "Beshrew me" (a mild form of asseveration) is frequently in Shakespeare followed by *but*.

Page 74. 67. **On't.** Of it, a phrase still used in the north of England.

### SCENE VII

"In this scene the Prince of Morocco makes his choice among the caskets. We learn the mottoes on the caskets, and see the Prince led away by pride to choose the golden exterior and 'what many men desire.' These preliminary scenes serve chiefly to work up our interest for the final test of Bassanio."

1. **Discover.** Uncover or disclose.

4. **Who.** For *which*.

Page 75. 8. **As blunt and plain as the metal itself.**

12. **Withal.** Together with it.

20. **Shows.** Appearances.

26. **Rated by thy estimation.** Valued according to thy reputation.

30. **Disabling.** See note on I, i, 123.

Page 76. 40. **Mortal breathing saint.** This saint, who is still alive; who, though canonized, still breathes.

41. **Hyrcanian.** Hyrcania was the ancient name of the region south of the Caspian.—**Vasty.** A favorite epithet of Shakespeare's. Cf. *Henry IV, Part III* (III, i): "I can call spirits from the vasty deep." He also uses the odd noun *vastidity* (=immensity) in *Measure for Measure* (III, i, 69): "Though all this world's vastidity you had."

42. **Throughfares.** *Through* and *thorough* are the same word; their root is *thor* (the same word as our *door* and the German *Thor*).

43. **Come view.** Cf. the American (which is an old English) idiom, "help him build a house." This usage is found with many English verbs, as *bid*, *dare*, *need*, *make*, *see*, etc.

51. **Rib.** Enclose.—**Cerecloth.** From Lat. *cera*, wax. It was a kind of cloth dipped in wax, and used to wrap the bodies of the dead.

53. **Ten times.** This was the relative value of gold and silver in Shakespeare's time.

57. **Insculped upon.** The figure of the *angel* was in relief. The angel was St. Michael piercing the dragon; and the value of the coin was ten shillings.

59. **Key.** Pronounced in Shakespeare's time, as now in Ireland, *kay*.

Page 77. 63. **Carriion death.** A skull from which the flesh had rotted off. (Cl. P. S.)

77. **Part.** For *depart*. So Shakespeare has (IV, i, 179 of this play) *strained for restrained; cause for because; longing for belonging; and stroyed for destroyed*.

79. **Complexion.** Probably here *character*, as in III, i, 29.

### SCENE VIII

"This scene shows us the various characters in side lights. Shylock is spoken of with the greatest contempt, and described wavering between his daughter and his ducats. Antonio, on the other hand, is most highly praised. We receive a first intimation of the coming ruin of the merchant."

4. **Villain.** Not in the modern sense, but simply as a vague expression of contempt; low fellow.—**Raised.** Roused.

Page 78. 10. **Certified.** Informed. From Lat. *certiorem facere*, to inform.

25. **Keep his day,** for payment.

27. **Reason'd.** Conversed. See note on I, ii, 21, and *Luke* v, 18: "Why reason ye thus with yourselves?"

30. **Fraught.** Freight.

33. **You were best.** It were best for you. The inflection for the dative in our pronouns was the same as that for the accusative. But the accusative (objective) of an active verb can be changed into the nominative of a passive verb; and the same thing was done with the dative. Thus in "He bought me a house," *me* is a dative; but, in turning it, people will say either: "A house was bought me," or—most illogically—"I was bought a house"; "I was given a place"; "I was offered a chair." Hence such absurdities as "I was shown over the house."

39. **Slubber.** Slur. Cogs.: Slip; slop; sloppy.

Page 79. 42. **Mind of love.** Loving mind. A common idiom in Shakespeare. Thus we have: a waste of shame; a god of power; men of sin; a gentleman of blood; pageants of delight; a dance of custom; apes of idleness; a tale of length; a boy of tears; and many others. Cf. Keats's phrase, "a thing of beauty."



43. **Employ . . . to.** Shakespeare in other passages always uses *in*.

48. **Affection.** Emotion.—**Sensible.** Full of feeling.

52. **Quicken.** Enliven.—**Embraced.** Which he clings to, or embraces.

## SCENE IX

"In this scene the Prince of Arragon tries his fortune with the caskets, but meets with no better success than his predecessor. At the end we are prepared for the entrance of Bassanio."

1. **Straight.** Straightway, at once.

3. **Election.** Choice. From Lat. *eligo*, I choose.

**Page 80.** 13. **Marriage.** Three syllables, with the accent on *age* and the French pronunciation.

18. **So have I address'd me.** For this I have prepared myself.

24. **That many . . . multitude.** This sentence would in modern English stand the other way: The fool multitude may, etc.

26. **Fond.** Foolish.

27. **The martlet.** A kind of swallow. In *Macbeth* (I, vi, 4) it is called "the temple-haunting martlet."

28. **In the weather.** Among storm and rain. Cf. the modern phrase, "to weather the storm."

**Page 81.** 29. **In the force.** Exposed to the attack.

31. **Jump with.** Agree with.

37. **Cozen.** Cheat. A verb evolved out of *cousin*.—SKEAT.

41. **Derived.** From *rivus*, a stream. Cog.: Derivation.—**Clear.** Shakespeare has: a clear life; clear in his great office (*Macbeth*, I, vii, 18); a clear countenance, etc.

42. **Purchased.** Acquired. In Chaucer, *purchase* means to prosecute, from Fr. *pourchasser*, to hunt.

47. **Ruin.** Refuse.

50. **Assume desert.** Assume that I am a deserving person.

54. **Schedule.** A little scroll.

**Page 82.** 60. **Distinct.** Accented on *dis*.

62. **Fire.** A dissyllable, as Matthew Arnold and other modern poets still make it.

67. **I wis.** A blunder for *ywis*, an O. E. word for *indeed* or *certainly* (cf. German *gewiss*). Coleridge and Macaulay make the same blunder, in the *Ancient Mariner* ("a speck, a mist, a shape, I wis"), and in the ballad of *Horatius*. There never was a verb *wis*.

71. **Sped.** Done for, or undone. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet* (III, i, 88).

73. **By the time.** In proportion to the time.—**Linger.** From long. Cf. late, loiter.

77. **Wroth.** Misery.

82. **Goes.** This looks like the singular; but it is really the Northern plural. Of the three chief dialects which were dominant in England in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the North made its plural in *es*, as *we hopes*; the Midland in *en*, *we hopen*; and the Southern in *eth*, *we hopeth*. There are in Shakespeare many survivals of the Northern plural (see Abbott, sect. 333).

**Page 83.** 88. **Sensible.** Evident to the senses, or substantial. Cf. *Macbeth* (II, i, 36): "Art thou not, fatal vision, as sensible to feeling as to sight?"—**Regreets.** Greetings. Cf. *King John* (III, i, 241).

89. **Commends.** Compliments.

90. **Yet I have not.** I have never yet. (Cl. P. S.)

97. **High-day.** Cf. the phrase "high-days and holidays."

99. **Post.** Postman.

### ACT III

#### SCENE I

"In the third act the various scattered threads of the drama are gathered up and brought together in preparation for the crisis of the following act. The first scene confirms the tidings of Antonio's losses. The conversations between Shylock and the two friends, and between Shylock and Tubal, are masterpieces of character drawing, both of the Jew and of his somewhat flighty daughter."

**Page 84.** 2. **It lives there.** The rumor is current there.

3. **The narrow seas.** The English Channel.

4. **The Goodwins.** The Goodwin Sands, off the Isle of Thanet, in Kent. The tradition is that these sands formed part of the estate of the great Earl Godwin, father of Harold, and that they were swallowed up by the sea in the year 1100.

6. **Tall.** Strong. (Co. S.)—**Gossip.** Talker; but originally *sib in God*=related to God. Godfathers and godmothers were the true *godsibs* or *gossips*.

9. **Knapped.** Snapped.

**Page 85.** 27. **The wings she flew withal.** The disguise she stole away in.

43. **Match.** Bargain.

45. **Smug.** Neat, well-dressed, and self-contented. Cf. Ger. *schmuck*. Shakespeare has the phrase, *a smug bridegroom*.

46. **Mart.** An abridged form of *market*.

Page 86. 54. **Hindered me.** Kept me from gaining half a million ducats. (Cl. P. S.)

60. **Fed.** Supply *is he not*.

72. **Better.** Frequently used by Shakespeare as a verb.

Page 87. 77. **Matched.** Found to match them.

84. **Frankfort-on-the-Main** has always been famous for its fairs.

86. **In that one diamond.**

Page 88. 118. **One of them.** Tubal skilfully intermingles "good news" with "bad news," and thus works Shylock's passion of anger and avarice up to its highest height.

121. **Turquoise.** Spelt also *Turkis* and *Turkois*, from the word *Turkey*. It is a pale blue stone, often set in the ring presented by an accepted lover. The permanence of its color was believed to depend on the constancy of his affection.

## SCENE II

"This scene forms the climax of the great love plot of the drama. Bassanio wins and marries Portia, thereby giving her a ground for the part she plays in the following act. Even before Bassanio makes his choice of the leaden casket, Portia admits her desire for his success. After his triumph she gives herself and all she has with the greatest grace and dignity imaginable. There is no forcing of inclinations in this chance choice, between either Portia and Bassanio, or Nerissa and Gratiano. Before the lovers have been together long, however, a messenger enters, bringing word from Antonio of the forfeiture of the bond, and of the merchant's desire to see Bassanio before his death. Portia despatches her lover immediately to bring all possible help to his unfortunate benefactor."

Page 89. 6. **In such a quality.** In the way I am doing.

8. **Hath no tongue.** Can think, but must not speak.

11. **I am forsworn.** I should then be. Forsworn=perjured. The *for* here has the negative force, not the intensive force it has in *fordone* and *forlorn*.

12. **So**=forsworn.—**So**=under these circumstances.

15. **O'erlooked.** An allusion to the evil eye. It here means *fascinated*.

18. **Naughty.** Good for naught, or wicked.

20. **So** (the last *so*)=not yours.

22. **Peize.** Some commentators read *piece*=*piece out*. But *peize* is from Fr. *peser*, to weigh down or *weight*. Portia wants to stay the flight of Time, and to hang leaden weights upon his wings.

In *Richard III* (V, iii, 106) we have: "Lest leaden slumber peize me down."

**Page 90.** 29. **Fear the enjoying.** Doubt whether I shall ever enjoy.

35. **Love . . . confession.** Had you said *love* instead of *live*, you would have expressed all that I have to confess. (Cl. P. S.)

44. **A swan-like end.** It was a common belief that swans uttered beautiful music just before they died. Tennyson has based a poem on this tradition. Cf. *Othello* (V, ii, 247): "I will play the swan, and die in music."

45. **Fading.** Dying away.

49. **Flourish** of trumpets in the ceremony of a coronation at the moment of placing the crown on the head of the king.

**Page 91.** 54. **Presence.** Noble demeanor.—**With much more love.** Alcides (Hercules) rescued Hesione, the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy,—not because he loved her, but because her father had promised to give him the horses which Tros had received from Zeus (Jupiter). Hesione had been fastened to a rock on the seashore, as a sacrifice to the offended Poseidon (Neptune).

57. **I stand for sacrifice.** Like Hesione.

58. **Dardanian.** Trojan.—**Wives.** Women. Such was the O. E. sense, which gradually turned into=*married women*, just as *man* meant (and still means in Germany) *husband*.

63. **Fancy.** Love. It is used by Shakespeare in this sense in twenty passages. The word *fancy* is a compressed form of *phantasy*.

73. **Be least themselves.** Be least like the things themselves.

74. **Still.** Constantly.

76. **Season'd.** Opposed to *tainted*.

**Page 92.** 79. **Approve.** Prove or support it. From Lat. *probus*, good; Fr. *prouver*; hence *approve*=to make good.

81. **Simple.** Unmixed. (From Lat. *simplex*=*semel plica*, single fold.)

86. **Livers white as milk.** Cf. *Hamlet*:—

That I am lily-livered, and lack gall  
To make oppression bitter.

87. **Excrement.** From Lat. *excrecere*, to grow out. The term is applied to the beard, which has generally been assumed to be a sign of physical courage.

88. **Redoubted.** Feared or formidable. Frequently used by Shakespeare before names, as in "my most redoubted lord," *Richard II* (III, iii, 198); "my most redoubted father."

91. **Lightest.** Shakespeare uses *light* here in two senses = *not heavy* and *frivolous*.

94. **Upon supposed fairness.** Placed upon fictitious beauty. Cf. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (IV, iv, 61): "Let the supposed fairies pinch him."

95. **The dowry of a second head.** Cf. Sonnet lxviii.:—

Before the golden tresses of the dead,  
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,  
To live a second life on second head;  
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay.

"Golden" locks were fashionable in Queen Elizabeth's time; and she herself, when between sixty and seventy, wore a large mass of false hair of this color.

99. **An Indian beauty.** The emphatic and contrasting word is *Indian*, a beauty that is dark and dusky, and merely Indian.

102. **Midas** was a king of Phrygia, who, in return for a kindness to one of the attendants of Dionysos (Bacchus), obtained from him the favor that everything he touched might turn into gold.

Page 93. 114. **Surfeit.** From Fr. *surfaire*, to overdo.

115. **Counterfeit.** Portrait. So in *Timon of Athens* (V, i): "Thou drawest a counterfeit best in all Athens."

120. **Sunder** gives *sundry*; as *sever*, *several*.

126. **Unfurnish'd.** Not having its other eye, because the painter had lost both his own, and could not finish his work, after he had painted one.

130. **Continent** = Lat. *continens*, containing. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II, i, 92) we have: "They [the rivers] have overborne their continents" [= containing banks].

136. **Fortune for your bliss.** Look upon your fortune as your greatest happiness.

Page 94. 140. **I come by note.** In accordance with the order written (or *noted*) in the scroll.

141. **In a prize.** In a competition for a prize.

156. **In your account.** Estimation. This *account* is used in the subjective sense; the *account* in line 158 in the objective sense.

157. **Livings.** Estates. Cf. *The Winter's Tale* (IV, ii, 102): "Where my land and living lies." The word is now confined to estates which belong to the Church.

159. **To term in gross.** To speak generally of.

Page 95. 172. **I give them with this ring.** So Shylock says (III, i, 121): "I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor."

175. **Vantage.** Vantage-ground.—**Exclaim on.** Exclaim against. Shakespeare uses *on* with this verb in seven passages,

in such phrases as "exclaims on Death"; "on the direful night"; etc.

176. **Bereft.** Past participle of *bereave*, compound of *reave*, a form of *rob*. The ordinary function of *be* is to change an intransitive into a transitive verb (as in *moan*, *bemoan*); but it is frequently added to verbs already transitive; as, *befit*, *bemock*, *bestir*, *bepraise*, *bestain*.

179. **Fairly spoke.** Well and clearly spoken. So Shakespeare talks of books "very fairly bound," meaning *elegantly*.

182. **Blent.** Blended.

187. **Our time that.** The antecedent is to be taken out of *our*. Cf. V, i, 198: "If you had known . . . *her* worthiness *that* gave the ring"; and *Julius Cæsar* (I, i, 53):—

And do you now strew flowers in *his* way  
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?

192. **None from me.** A double use of the word *from*.

Page 96. 200. **Intermission** (five syllables). Pause, delay, or hesitation.

205. **Roof** of my mouth.

206. **Last.** Hold or continue—another of the weak plays upon words which the euphuistic tendency of the Elizabethan age made common in Shakespeare's time.

209. **Achieved.** Gained

219. **Very.** True. Cf. *The Tempest* (II, ii, 95): "Thou art very Trinculo indeed." And *Hamlet* (II, ii, 49): "I have found the very cause of Hamlet's lunacy."

Page 97. 228. **Commends him.** Himself. This is a common usage in Elizabethan English, and still more common in Early English. Cf. *King John* (V, vii, 55):—

My heart hath one poor string to stay *it* by.

232. **Estate.** The unabridged form of the word *state*. Cf. *Coriolanus* (II, i, 105): "It gives me an estate of seven years' health."

239. **Shrewd contents.** Evil news. Cf. *As You Like It* (V, iv, 180): "Endured *shrewd* days and nights" And we find in Shakespeare such phrases as "a shrewd turn," "foul shrewd news," and "to lift shrewd steel against our golden crown."

242. **The constitution.** Temper, and habit of mind.

243. **Constant.** Steady, firm-minded.

Page 98. 254. **Braggart.** *Ard*, *hard* is a suffix which seems to indicate *habit of mind*. Thus a *braggart* is one who habitually *brags*. Cf. coward, laggard, sluggard.

258. **Mere.** Thorough, unqualified, absolute.

260. **The paper as.** The paper being as.

262. **Issuing.** Pouring out. This word in ordinary English is transitive only in one phrase, "issue a paper or proclamation."

268. **It should appear.** We should have expected *would*.

Page 99. 272. **Confound.** Ruin.

274. **And doth impeach . . .** This line means: He accuses the state of not giving equal rights and equal freedom to all.

276. **Magnifico.** A title given to the nobility of Venice. See also *Othello* (I, ii, 12).

277. **Greatest port.** Highest rank. The meaning here may be contrasted with that in I, i, 124.—**Persuaded with.** Advised and pleaded with.

278. **Envious.** Malicious.

285. **Deny.** Forbid.

289. **The best condition'd and unwearied.** That is, most unwearied, the superlative being supplied out of *best*.

295. **Deface.** Cancel.

298. **Through** ought to be *thorough*, to make the line.

Page 100. 308. **Cheer.** Countenance. So we have in the New Testament: "Be of good cheer!" And in Shakespeare:—

Whereat she smiled with so sweet a cheer.

314. **You and I.** Shakespeare seems to consider the phrase *You-and-I* as incapable of inflection.

### SCENE III

"The ruin of Antonio is accomplished, and he is in the hands of the gaoler. Shylock is impenetrable to all entreaties of Salarino or Antonio, answering:—

Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause:  
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.

His speeches ring with long-pent hatred."

1. **Gaoler, etc.** Debtors in prison seem to have been allowed to go out, accompanied by an officer, for the purpose of making arrangements with their creditors. This was the case in London down to 1800.

Page 101. 9. **Naughty.** Unjust and wicked.

19. **Kept.** Dwelt. *Keep* is frequently used in its intransitive sense by Shakespeare. Thus we find: "Where earth-delving conies

keep"; "A Spaniard that keeps here in court"; "Knock at his study, where, they say, he keeps."

20. **Bootless.** Useless.

23. **Made moan.** Complained.

25. **Grant.** Allow. Cf. *Cymbeline* (II, i, 50): "A fool granted" (=allowed or licensed).

27. **Commodity.** Facilities of trading.

Page 102. 31. **Consisteth.** For *consist*; but *trade-and-profit* may be looked upon as a compound noun, equivalent to *commerce*.

32. **'Bated.** Reduced, weakened.

#### SCENE IV

"In this scene we see Portia preparing to follow her husband to Venice, accompanied by her maid, Nerissa. The scene shows us the intellectual firmness of Portia. At a time when few persons would be calm, she directs her household perfectly, clearly, and without a moment's hesitation."

2. **Conceit.** Idea.

7. **Lover.** Friend. This meaning is common in Shakespeare. Cf. *Julius Cæsar* (III, ii, 13), where Brutus begins his speech: "Romans, countrymen, and lovers!"

9. **Enforce you.** Can make you feel.

10. **Repent for.** Shakespeare has *repent of*, *for*, and *over*, and also without a preposition.

12. **Waste.** Spend. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (II, i, 57):—

A merrier hour was never wasted there.

And *Julius Cæsar* (II, i, 59):—

March is wasted fifteen days.

14. **Needs.** An old genitive=*of necessity*. Similar genitives, now used as adverbs, exist in *else* (= *ellès*), *lengthways*, *Mondays* (= of a Monday); and *hence* (*hennès*), *whence* (*whennès*).

15. **Lineaments.** Features.

Page 103. 25. **Husbandry.** Care.—**Manage.** Management. The word *management* does not occur in Shakespeare at all.

33. **Imposition.** The task I impose on you.

35. **Lays.** For *lay*. This is common with Shakespeare.

Page 104. 49. **Padua.** A university famous in the Middle Ages as a great law school.



52. **Imagined speed.** With the speed of thought.
53. **Tranect.** The word is probably *traject*, from Italian *traghetto*, a ferry.
56. **Convenient.** Suitable.
59. **Think of us.** Think of seeing us.
67. **Reed voice.** The shrill voice that comes between boyhood and manhood.
68. **Frays.** Battles.
69. **Quaint.** Finely turned, elaborate.
- Page 105. 72. **I could not do withal.** I did not care for them; I could not do with them; they were not the sort I liked. I could not help it. (Cl. P. S.)
77. **Raw.** Unripe, youthful. (Co. S.)—**Jacks.** A term of contempt. Cf. *Cheap-Jack* for *hawker*.
79. **All my whole.** A phrase found eight times in Shakespeare. See *Henry VI, Part I* (I, i, 126): "All the whole army stood agazed on him."

## SCENE V

"In this scene we have more playfulness between Jessica, Launcelot, and Lorenzo, and get a little further insight into the characters of the actors in this secondary love plot. The scene ends with Jessica's famous eulogy on Portia."

3. **I fear you.** Fear for you. Shakespeare makes *fear*, in the sense of *to be anxious about*, take a direct object. See III, ii, 29.
4. **Agitation.** Another blunder of Launcelot's for *cogitation*, idea of.

Page 106. 16. **Scylla.** In the Straits of Messina there was, according to the old Greek tradition, a dangerous rock called *Scylla* on the Italian coast; and on the opposite coast of Sicily there was a whirlpool called *Charybdis*. In certain states of the wind, the sailor who kept away from the one fell into the other; and hence the Latin line: *Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim*—(He falls into Scylla who desires to avoid Charybdis).

32. **Are out.** Have fallen out, or quarrelled. Cf. *Julius Cæsar* (I, i, 18): "Be not out with me."

Page 107. 48. **Quarrelling with occasion.** Quibbling on every opportunity.

57. **Discretion.** The power of separating this from that. From Lat. *discerno*, I divide (mental things).

60. **A many.** Shakespeare uses both *the* and *a* with *many*. Cf. *Coriolanus* (III, i, 66):—

*The mutable, rank-scented many,*  
Let them regard me as I do not flatter.

And *King John* (IV, ii, 199): "Told of a *many* thousand war-like French." And we also find a *many* followed by *of*, as "*A many* of your horsemen" (*Henry V*, IV, vii, 90). Dr. Abbott, sect. 87, says: "*A* was frequently inserted before a numeral adjective, for the purpose of indicating that the objects enumerated are regarded collectively as *one*." And he quotes, "this three mile"; "an eight days after these sayings" (*Luke ix*, 28).

61. **Garnish'd like him.** Furnished with words and ideas like his.

62. **Defy the matter.** Set the meaning at defiance. (Co. S.)

69. **Mean it.** Be thoroughly in earnest about living an upright life.

Page 108. 74. **Pawn'd.** Staked, to make up the difference.

76. **Of me.** In me.

79. **Stomach.** Inclination.

82. **I'll set you forth.** Describe or praise you fully.

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

"This is the famous trial scene. It is laid in the courtroom before the Duke and Magnificoes of Venice. At first we have appeals to Shylock's mercy from the Duke, from Bassanio, and from Antonio's other friends, but all in vain. Shylock is without softness. Portia now enters, dressed as a doctor of laws sent by the learned Bellario. She hears the case reviewed, and says: 'Then must the Jew be merciful.' 'On what compulsion must I?' answers Shylock. Now follows Portia's famous speech on mercy. Shylock not only will listen to no exhortations, but will not accept ten times the amount of his bond in payment. Portia says that the court awards Shylock his pound of flesh, and he prepares to cut it. Before he has touched Antonio, she tells him that the bond gives him 'no jot of blood,' and if Antonio lose any, all the Jew's goods are confiscated. Shylock offers to take thrice the money, and then the principal only. But Portia says 'No'; he shall have only his bond. Shylock will 'stay no longer question.' But the righteous judge will not let him escape until he promises to hold half his goods for Lorenzo and Jessica, and to become a Christian. The Jew consents and goes staggering from the room. Both the Duke and Bassanio now wish to entertain Portia, and the latter begs her to accept the three thousand ducats, but she

will have naught but the gloves of Antonio and the ring of Bassanio. This Bassanio feels that he cannot grant, for the ring is his wife's present, but finally, at Antonio's solicitation, sends Gratiano with the ring after Portia."

Hazlitt speaks of this scene as follows:

"The whole of the trial scene, both before and after the entrance of Portia, is a masterpiece of dramatic skill. The legal acuteness, the passionate declamations, the sound maxims of jurisprudence, the wit and irony interspersed in it, the fluctuations of hope and fear in the different persons, and the completeness and suddenness of the catastrophe, cannot be surpassed."

**Page 109. 5. Uncapable.** *Un* is the English, *in* the Latin, negative prefix. But Shakespeare has: unfirm, impossible, incurable, unvincible, etc.; and, on the other hand, he writes incharitable, infortunate, incivil, and ingrateful (all of which, by the way, are right). The modern use is itself variable, for we say *ungrateful* and *ingratitude*; *unequal* and *inequality*.—**Empty from.** This is the only instance in Shakespeare where *empty* is followed by *from*.

7. **Qualify.** Modify, moderate.

8. **Obdurate.** The accent is on *dur*.

9. **That.** A representative particle for *since*. The French use *que* in the same way; instead of repeating *si*, *quand*, or some such conjunction, they insert *que*.

13. **Very** would seem here to carry the meaning of *utmost*. Dr. Schmidt says that *very* is "generally placed before substantives to indicate that they must be understood in their full and unrestricted sense."

**Page 110. 20. Remorse.** Pity or relenting. This is much the more usual meaning in Shakespeare. Cf. *King John* (IV, iii, 50): "The tears of soft remorse."

22. **Where.** Whereas.

24. **Loose.** Give up or release.

26. **Moiety.** A portion. In nine passages Shakespeare uses it in the strict sense of *one half*; and in seven passages he employs it in the sense of a *portion*.

39. **Charter.** Venice was an independent republic, with a Duke (Doge) at its head; but perhaps Shakespeare thought that it, like some of the minor Italian and German states, held a charter from the Emperor of Germany.

43. **Say.** Let us say or suppose.

**Page 111. 46. Baned.** Poisoned. O. E. *bana*, destruction. We have the words *henbane* and *rat's-bane*.

47. **A gaping pig.** A pig's head on the table, with a lemon in its mouth.

52. **Firm.** Sound, well-founded.

59. **Lodged.** Settled. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet* (II, iii, 36): "Where cares lodge, sleep will never lie."

61. **A losing suit.** A suit in which I can gain nothing.

63. **Current.** Course.

66. **Hates . . . kill.** Aristotle's definition of hatred is "a desire for the non-existence of something which exists."

67. **Offence.** Offence taken.

69. **Question.** Discuss.

71. **Main flood.** The *flowing* (= flood) of the *main sea*.

72. **Question.** Here the word is used as a noun. See below, line 167.

**Page 112.** 76. **Fretten.** The original meaning of *fret* in O. E. is *to eat* (German *fressen*). So Shakespeare has: "Rust the hidden treasure frets." And we have in Scripture the phrase, "a moth *fretting* a garment."

82. **Judgement.** Sentence passed.

91. **Parts.** Offices, functions. Shakespeare, as an actor himself, very frequently uses *parts* in this sense.

**Page 113.** 103. **Upon my power.** Upon my own authority.

105. **Determine.** Decide upon.

113. **Tainted.** Diseased.

**Page 114.** 126. **Wit.** Sense.

130. **Pythagoras.** A Greek philosopher who is said to have first promulgated the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

133. **Govern'd.** Inhabited. (Co. S.)—**Who, hanged.** Another instance of the hanging nominative.

134. **Fleet.** Flit.

136. **Infused in.** In line 132, Shakespeare uses *into*. The fact is that the O. E. *in*, like the Latin, meant both *in* and *into*.

139. **Offend'st.** Givest annoyance to, or hurtest.

141. **Cureless.** Past cure. A hybrid—as *cure* is Latin (*cura*, care) and *less* is an English suffix.

147. **Conduct.** Escort or guidance. Cf. *Henry V* (I, ii, 299): "Convey them with safe conduct."

157. **Fill up.** Fulfil.

**Page 115.** 158. **No impediment to let him lack.** No hindrance to his receiving. (Cl. P. S.)—**Reverend estimation.** Reverence and esteem.

167. **Holds this question.** Keeps this discussion before.

168. **Thoroughly.** Thoroughly. Both forms were used indifferently in Shakespeare's time. We still have the adjective *thorough* and the word *thoroughfare*; but Shakespeare has *throughfare*.

175. **Danger** comes from a Low Latin word *domigerium* or *dangerium*, the power of inflicting *damnum* (loss or fine).

**Page 117. 177. Must.** Portia had used the word in its ordinary loose meaning, as equal to "the only thing that will meet the case is for him to be merciful;" but Shylock takes it up in its most literal, hardest, and most absolute sense; and out of this twist in interpretation naturally rises the beautiful speech of Portia—one of the finest specimens of sweet, flowing, and rhythmic eloquence in all literature.

179. **Strain'd.** Constrained or restrained.

181. **Twice bless'd.** Pouring forth a double blessing.

187. **Fear of.** With an objective meaning.

**Page 118. 209. Truth.** Honesty. The word *truth* is not confined by Shakespeare to an attribute of a statement; he applies it largely to persons. Cf. *Henry VI, Part II* (III, i, 202):—

In thy face I see  
The map of honor, truth, and loyalty.

212. **Curb . . . of.** Shakespeare has only twice used this idiom. The other passage is in *Henry IV, Part I* (III, i, 169):—

And curbs himself even of his natural scope  
When you do cross his humor.

**Page 119. 243. Hath full relation.** Is in every respect applicable.

246. **More elder.** Shakespeare has both double comparatives and double superlatives. He has: more better, more braver, most worst, most unkindest.

252. **On your charge.** At your own expense.

**Page 120. 263. Use.** Custom. Cf. *Hamlet* (III, iv, 167):—

*Use* almost can change the stamp of nature.

270. **Speak me fair.** Speak well of me. Cf. *Twelfth Night* (V, 185): "I bespake you fair." Shakespeare also turns *fair* into a verb, in Sonnet cxxvii, 6:—

*Fairing* the foul with art's false borrowed face.

272. **A love.** Lover, dear friend. See note on III, iv, 7.

273. **Repent.** Regret.

276. **With all my heart.** It lies in the English character to make these humorous remarks in the presence of death. Cf. the sayings of Sir T. More at his execution. When Thomas Hood was dying of consumption and reduced almost to skin and bone, a mustard poultice was put on his feet, and he was heard to whisper: "There's very little meat for the mustard."

Page 122. 322. **Just.** Exact.

323. **In the substance.** In the gross weight.

326. **Estimation.** Estimated weight.

Page 123. 347. **Contrive.** Plot.

357. **Formerly.** A word used in legal documents for *as afore-said*.

Page 124. 369. **That.** My life.

373. **Render.** Give, as in line 196.

376. **The fine for one half.** The fine which is to be placed upon the half of his property.

378. **In use.** To employ it in my business, but as trust money.

386. **Recant.** Revoke. Used also by Shakespeare in the sense of *recall*.

Page 125. 394. **Ten more.** To make up twelve jurymen, who, as Ben Jonson informs us, were in the time of Queen Elizabeth jestingly called "godfathers-in-law."

400. **Serves you not.** Is not at your own disposal.

401. **Gratify.** Reward or recompense.

407. **Cope.** Requite or pay for. The word is more generally used by Shakespeare in the sense of *encounter* (either in a friendly or in a hostile way).—**Withal.** With. But *withal* is always placed at the end of the sentence.

416. **Of force.** Inevitably.—**Attempt.** Press upon. Cf. *The Winter's Tale* (IV, ii): "He will never attempt us again."

Page 126. 440. **An.** *An if* is a pleonasm, like *or ere* (*or* and *ere* being two forms of the same word). The meaning and force of *an* were probably weakened and partially forgotten, and so *if* was added.

## SCENE II

"This scene forms a connecting link between the storm of the fourth and the calm of the fifth act. Gratiano delivers the ring to Portia, and while Nerissa is showing him the way to Shylock's dwelling he loses his own ring as well."

Page 127. 6. **Advice.** Thought or deliberation. See I, i, 142.

Page 128. 15. **Old swearing.** Plentiful or hard. Cf. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (I, iv, 4): "Here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the king's English." *Old*, from meaning what one has known of old, has come to mean that which is most remarkable or extreme in one's experience; as an old-fashioned winter is one that comes up to one's strongest idea of a severe winter.

## ACT V

## SCENE I

"This act adds a beautiful finishing touch to the drama. We have first an exquisite moonlight scene between Lorenzo and Jessica. Portia and Nerissa enter, and are quickly followed by Antonio, Bassanio, and Gratiano. After the first greetings are over, a playful quarrel breaks out between the lovers about the rings, which continues until Portia, seeing the pain she and Nerissa are causing their husbands, tells Bassanio the truth. She also has good news for Antonio and for Lorenzo, so the whole play ends in happiness. The last act is filled with most exquisite poetry, hardly to be surpassed."

**Page 129.** Notice the intense quietness and social calm of this last act and scene—which Shakespeare introduces as a contrast to the terrible anxiety and tragedy of the trial.

4. **Troilus**, the son of Priam and Hecuba, fell in love with Cressid (or Cressida), a Greek. The story was a well-known one in Shakespeare's time. A stock-play, called *Troilus and Cressid*, which Shakespeare took as the basis of his own, was well known upon the English stage; and Chaucer had, in the fourteenth century, written a long poem on the same subject.

7. **Thisbe**. A beautiful Babylonian lady, with whom Pyramus was in love. They agreed to meet at the tomb of Ninus; but on arriving there, Thisbe was terrified by the sight of a lioness that had just killed an ox. She fled and left her cloak, which was stained with blood. When Pyramus reached the place and found the cloak, he thought a wild beast had killed her; and he made away with himself—an example which was followed by Thisbe.

10. **Dido**. An allusion to the desertion of the Queen of Carthage by Æneas.—**Willow**. The symbol of unhappy love. Cf. *Henry VI, Part III* (III, iii, 208):—

I'll wear the willow garland for his sake;

and the beautiful song of Desdemona in *Othello*, IV, iii.

13. **Medea**. The daughter of Æetes, king of Colchis, and afterward the wife of Jason, whom she helped to seize the Golden Fleece; she was a great enchantress. To renew the youth of Æson, the father of Jason, she boiled him in a caldron into which she had thrown magic herbs, and thus made him young again.

**Page 130. 23. Out-night you.** Beat you at this game of "In such a night."

**Page 131. 49. Expect.** Await.

**59. Patines.** From Lat. *patina*, a plate; the name of the small gold or silver plate used for the bread in the Eucharist.

**61. Angel sings.** This is an allusion to the Platonic doctrine of "the music of the spheres."

**64. Vesture of decay.** This body in which the soul is clothed here.

**Page 132. 66. Diana.** As the goddess of the moon.

**70. Attentive.** On the stretch. From Lat. *tendo*, I stretch. Cogs.: Tense, tension, intend, contend.

**72. Unhandled.** Not as yet under the hand of the trainer.

**77. Mutual.** This word, which ought to mean *reciprocal*, has always been loosely employed in English. A very usual meaning in Shakespeare is *common*. And Dickens uses it in the same erroneous, but very popular, sense in the title of one of his novels, *Our Mutual Friend*.

**80. Orpheus.** The son of Œagrus and Calliope. He lived in Thrace at the period of the Argonauts, and was the musician in the *Argo*.

**81. Stockish.** Insensible. Cf. the phrase "stocks and stones."

**83 The man.** Cf. *Julius Cæsar* (I, ii, 205), where Cæsar talks "of that spare Cassius:"—

He loves no plays,  
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music.

**85. Spoils.** Acts of spoliation.

**87. Erebus.** From Gr. *Erebos*, darkness—the brother of Night, and the name for the gloomy space under the earth, through which the spirits pass into Hades.

**Page 133. 99. Without respect.** Except relatively.

**103. Attended.** Attended to.

**109. Endymion.** The love of Seléné (the moon) for the beautiful youth Endymion has been the subject of many a poem—among others, one by John Keats.

**Page 134. 121. Tucket.** A set of notes on a trumpet to announce an arrival.

**132. God sort.** Dispose or arrange. Still used in this sense in Scotland.

**Page 135. 136. In all sense.** In all reason. So also *in no sense*. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew* (V, ii, 141): "And in no sense is meet or amiable."

**141. Breathing courtesy.** Courtesy of mere breath or words.



146. **Posy.** Motto. Contracted from *poesy*; but, according to some, corrupted from Fr. *pensée*, a thought.

154. **Respective.** Had respect for your oath.

160. **Scrubbed.** Paltry, or it may be *stunted*, like *scrub* or *underwood*.

Page 137. 172. **Masters.** Is master of.

175. **I were best.** See note on II, viii, 33.

Page 138. 199. **Contain.** Retain Cf. Sonnet lxxvii, 9: "What thy memory cannot contain."

201. **Much unreasonable.** So Shakespeare has: much forgetful, much guilty, much sea-sick, much sorry. We still say *not much unlike*; but we cannot say *much unlike*, as Shakespeare does.

203. **Wanted.** As to have lacked; dependent on *much unreasonable*.

204. **As a ceremony.** As a sacred thing. Only here used by Shakespeare in this sense.

212. **Did uphold.** Saved.

215. **Shame** in the subjective, and **courtesy** (=the demands of courtesy) in the objective sense.

Page 139. 232. **Enforced.** Forced upon me.

241. **Wealth.** Well-being, and probably pronounced *weelth*; but the association with *health* has altered the pronunciation along with the meaning. Cf. the Prayer-book: "In all time of our wealth;" and in the prayer for the King: "Grant him in health and wealth (=in all internal and external circumstances of good) long to live."

245. **Advisedly.** With knowledge or deliberately.

Page 140. 255. **Set forth.** Set out.

261. **Suddenly.** Unexpectedly.

265. **Living.** The means of living.

Page 141. 275. **Satisfied . . . at full.** Fully informed of the course of these events.

277. **Charge us . . . upon inter'gatories and answer all things faithfully,** are legal phrases taken from the practice of the Court of Queen's Bench.

279. **Fear.** Be anxious about.

# QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

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## STUDY OF THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

## ACT I

## SCENE I

1. What keynote is struck by the opening words?
2. From his own words and those of Salanio and Salarino, what sort of man do you think Antonio was? Sum up the characters of his two companions, as you judge from their words. How does Antonio estimate them?
3. What impression is given of Bassanio at his first appearance? Of his companions, especially Gratiano?
4. What is the effect of Gratiano's instant comment on Antonio's gravity (ll. 73-76)? Is the change a sudden one?
5. Compare Antonio's words (ll. 77-79) with Macbeth's (V, v, 24-26). Compare them with Jaques's in *As You Like It* (II. ii.): "All the world's a stage," etc. What similarity? What difference? Is there any reference to the stage in *Julius Cæsar* or other plays with which you are familiar? Cite their general nature.
6. What is Bassanio's motive in wooing Portia (ll. 122-134)? Does he love her (ll. 161-176)?
7. Explain fully the relations between Bassanio and Antonio.
8. Explain classical allusions (ll. 165-172).
9. Explain ll. 177-179 in the light of what Antonio said to Salanio and Salarino (ll. 41-45). Which is the true state of affairs? Why?
10. Comment on the use of prose, of blank verse, of rhyme, of end stopt and run-on lines, of feminine endings.
11. Select, giving line reference, examples of (1) simile, (2) metaphor, (3) personification, (4) metonymy, (5) antithesis, (6) synecdoche, (7) allusion.
12. Compare the introduction as a whole with that of *Julius Cæsar*; of *Macbeth*.

## SCENE II

1. State your opinion of Portia's character as seen in her words.
2. Pick out the most telling epigrams. Put the meaning in your own words. Does it gain or lose, and why?
3. Do you think Bassanio knew of the casket scheme? Why?
4. How does this scene bear out what Bassanio says (Sc. i, ll. 161-176)? Is there anything to bear out his confidence of "thrift" in his wooing?

## SCENE III

1. Explain the condition of the Jews at this time, especially in Venice. State the laws of Venice regarding trade, carried on by natives and by aliens (under which the Jews would be classed).

2. At what date would trade be carried on with Mexico? What evidence is there here as to the date of the play?

3. Sum up the character of Shylock as you see him before Antonio enters. Compare him with Isaac of York in *Ivanhoe*.

4. State exactly Shylock's grudge against Antonio. Is there justice in it? On what did the Jew depend for his actual existence?

5. What is the effect of ll. 40-51 on your estimate of Antonio?

6. In ll. 101-137, show reasons for Shylock's hatred of Antonio. Explain how the kindly friend and courtly gentleman, Antonio, can act thus.

7. Why does the shrewd merchant, who knows all his fortune is at sea, take the bond?

8. Why does Bassanio, who forebodes evil, allow it? Is he selfish? Defend your answer.

Sum up what has been accomplished by Act I. Who is the central figure? Has he passed the incentive? If so, where

## ACT II

## SCENE I

1. Sum up Morocco's character as seen in his words to Portia.

2. Comment on her words, ll. 20-22.

3. What new light is thrown on the casket problem in ll. 39-42? State it as you understand it, with its conditions and its purpose.

## SCENE II

1. What is accomplished by this comic scene? Compare Launcelot with Touchstone, the fool of *As You Like It*. Compare this scene with the porter's soliloquy in *Macbeth* (II, iii).

2. What view of Bassanio is here given? Comment on his reproof to Gratiano. Is the latter a squire or a servant? How has he been treated before?

## SCENE III

What is the purpose of this short scene? What is the effect, on your feeling toward Shylock, of Jessica's words?

## SCENE IV

What is accomplished by this scene? What in it is calculated to increase Shylock's hatred of Christians? To lower your opinion of Jessica?

## SCENE V

Criticise Shylock as a father. What is the effect of his attitude on your feeling toward Jessica? Has she any love or respect for him?

## SCENE VI

1. State in your own words ll. 8-19.
2. Criticise the scheme by which Jessica escapes. Her action in taking the money. Would Lorenzo have taken her without it? Why?

## SCENE VII

1. State the argument by which Morocco convinces himself that he should choose the gold casket. Criticise it.
2. Comment on the manner in which he bears defeat.

## SCENE VIII

1. How long is it since Scene V? (Reasons for your answer.)
2. Account for the fact that Salarino and Salanio have no sympathy for Shylock, yet much for Antonio.
3. Criticise Antonio's farewell (ll. 38-45).
4. How does all Venice know of the bond?

## SCENE IX

1. State and criticise Arragon's reasoning as to the right casket. Compare it with Morocco's. Compare the two men, especially the way they take defeat.
2. Whom do you infer "the young Venetian" to be? Do you think Nerissa knows it is Bassanio who is heralded, or is she surmising? Is there any hint as to why Gratiano was so anxious to come to Belmont?

Sum up Act II. Indicate any dramatic moments. Has the action been slow or fast? How and why?

## ACT III

## SCENE I

1. What seems to be the opinion of Shylock? Do they think that he is a man to be specially feared?

2. Account for their cruelty toward Shylock. What is its effect on his attitude toward Antonio?

3. Why should they expect him to refrain from taking the forfeit (ll. 50-51)?

4. Discuss Shylock's reply (ll. 52-72). What do you think of his reasons for hatred and revenge?

5. What new fuel is added to the fire of Shylock's rage in the interview with Tubal?

6. Criticise Jessica's actions as reported by Tubal. What is the worst feature? What is the effect on your opinion of her?

7. What is the effect, on your opinion of Shylock, of this glimpse of a softer side in his love for his dead wife?

## SCENE II

1. What differences do you note between this and the two previous casket scenes? Some stage managers condense the three scenes into one and place it here. What is gained, what lost, by this?

2. What does Portia show of her nature before Bassanio makes his choice?

3. Is Bassanio in love with her or her money? Defend your answer.

4. Explain the allusions in ll. 44-47. In ll. 55-60.

5. State fully, in your own words, the argument by which Bassanio chooses the lead casket. Compare it with the argument of Morocco. Of Arragon. Did you expect Bassanio to choose the right casket? Is it by outward show? Why?

6. In what light does Bassanio here appear? Does he seem a fit mate for Portia?

7. Discuss ll. 149-175 as revealing Portia's nature.

8. Discuss the imitation by Gratiano and Nerissa. Has Nerissa before seemed a sort of understudy for Portia? Where and how?

9. Why is the news of Antonio's trouble told here and now? How has Bassanio come to forget Antonio's danger? Did you expect him to? Why?

10. What is the significance of Jessica's presence among her

father's enemies, and her report of his hatred? When could she have heard of it (ll. 268-280)?

11. Is Antonio cruel in his letter to Bassanio? Defend your answer.

### SCENE III

1. Why should Antonio seek mercy from Shylock?
2. Sum up the reasons for Shylock's hatred (ll. 21-24 and elsewhere). Discuss the justice of each.
3. Explain the law alluded to (ll. 26-36).
4. What is the effect of this scene, coming immediately after Portia's scheme for Antonio's release?

### SCENE IV

1. What is the purpose of this scene and its general time as compared with the preceding?
2. Why is Portia making new plans? Does she fear Shylock may not accept money, or has she had later news? How can she jest, as she does with Nerissa, when a man's life is at stake?

### SCENE V

What is the effect of this scene of comedy? Comment on Jessica and Lorenzo as seen here.

Sum up Act III. What dramatic moments has it, and where? Is the action fast or slow? How and why? What character is foremost in action? In interest?

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

1. Criticise Antonio's bearing. Account for his failing to realize that there is a certain justice in Shylock's hatred and his revenge.
2. Discuss Shylock's reply to the Duke (ll. 35-61).
3. Why should Bassanio rail at Shylock when the whole occurrence is his fault?
4. What feelings underlie Antonio's words (ll. 69-82)?

5. Could Shylock hold his bargain elsewhere than in Venice? Defend your answer. Show the justice of his reply (ll. 88-102).

6. What is the effect on the audience of Portia's entry? Should the audience recognize her? Why?

7. What is the effect on the audience of this new appeal for mercy?

8. Why does she ask mercy at the moment when she assures him of justice without it?

9. What is the effect of Shylock's words (ll. 201-202)?

10. Portia declines to "do a little wrong to work a great right" when Bassanio requests it. Is her means of releasing Antonio inconsistent with this refusal? State the reasons for your answer.

11. What is the effect of Portia's repeated pleas for mercy and Shylock's demands for "justice and the bond"?

12. Show how sympathy for Shylock is made to decline steadily.

13. Criticise Antonio's words (ll. 259-276).

14. What is included in a bond or deed, as to the amount or extent of property conveyed by it? For instance, a deed of a house would cover what? Would Portia's reasoning as to the blood, etc., hold? Could Antonio plead ignorance of the terms? Show the justice in this injustice.

15. Why does not Portia show mercy, as she begged Shylock to do, and return to Shylock the amount Antonio borrowed? Would you prefer it?

16. Comment on Portia's relentless cruelty (ll. 342-358) after her own plea for mercy at first. Is it not enough to let him lose the three thousand ducats? State the reasons for your answer.

17. Comment on the sentence passed by Antonio (ll. 375-385). Does he show Shylock the same mercy Shylock showed him?

18. Why does no one feel any sympathy for Shylock? Did Shakespeare? Do you? Why?

19. What is Portia's reason for asking for the ring? Criticise it. Did she expect to get it?

## SCENE II

What is the effect of this scene? Why is the deed taken by Portia to Lorenzo? What is the effect on the feeling of the audience toward Shylock, when they see his property enrich Lorenzo, who has already robbed him?

Criticise the act as a whole for (1) sustained interest, (2) portrayal of character, (3) dramatic power, (4) fitness as a climax.



## ACT V

## SCENE I

1. What is the purpose of this scene of peace coming after the stormy scene in the court?

2. Explain the allusions in the first fourteen lines.

3. Compare Lorenzo's praise of music with Portia's (III, ii).

4. Comment on Portia's talk with Nerissa (ll. 89-110) as revealing character.

5. Criticise the episode of the rings. Is it out of keeping? Does it harmonize with Portia's character? Was Bassanio wrong in giving up the ring? Defend your answer. Show the value of the episode.

6. Criticise this heaping up of good fortune on Antonio. Is it out of keeping? Why is it given to Portia to announce?

Compare this act with Act IV for action, interest, etc. Criticise it as a conclusion.

## GENERAL TOPICS FOR WRITTEN WORK

## CHARACTER STUDY

Bassanio.

Antonio.

Gratiano.

Lorenzo.

Jessica.

## SHYLOCK

1. Attitude toward Antonio; toward his daughter.

2. His characteristics.

3. Defence of him.

## PORTIA

1. Individuality.

2. Character. (Compare with Portia in *Julius Cæsar*.)

3. Charm. (Compare with Rosalind in *As You Like It*.)

4. Intellect. (Compare with Lady Macbeth.)

## THE PLOTS, MAJOR AND MINOR.

Outline the action, and show how the plots are interwoven.

1. Antonio and Shylock.

2. Jessica and Lorenzo.

3. Bassanio and Portia.

4. Gratiano and Nerissa.





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